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Martin Heidegger And The Problem Of Transcendence

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Résumé

Cette thèse a pour point de départ l'idée du jeune Heidegger selon laquelle le sens de l'être doit être recherché au moyen d'une phénoménologie ontologique, plus précisément par l'analytique existentiale du *Dasein* et la destruction de l'histoire de l'ontologie ; ou, comme nous l'interprétons, dans la transcendance du *Dasein* et la transcendance de l'être. L'étude du problème de la transcendance fait l'objet d'une approche phénoménologique, laquelle porte une attention particulière au vécu *en tant que tel* ainsi qu'aux conditions de possibilité de ce vécu, et repose sur une lecture attentive et critique des œuvres de Heidegger. C'est une telle approche phénoménologique qui nous permettra de mener à bien notre analyse du problème de la transcendance dans le corpus heideggérien. Nous serons par ailleurs en mesure d'aborder le débat opposant à ce sujet la tradition analytique (plus particulièrement l'approche pragmatiste) et la tradition continentale, notre étude s'inscrivant dans le cadre de cette dernière.

Nous proposons ici une phénoménologie du problème de la transcendance qui fait également figure de phénoménologie du sens, de la possibilité et de la normativité. Prenant pour point de départ certaines contributions issues de la tradition continentale, nous soutenons que le sens de l'être peut être compris comme le problème de la transcendance. L'histoire de la philosophie doit être perturbée, déconstruite et repensée afin que le chemin de la philosophie, encore non pensé, puisse être mis au jour. L'accès à cet *autre* commencement doit être recherché dans la transcendance *en tant que telle* – de l'appel de la conscience fondé dans la nullité à l'encontre authentique avec la mort et l'ouverture de la temporalité ; de l'avènement historial de l'être jusqu'à, ultimement, le

refus de l'être et le retrait du rien. L'événement (*Ereignis*) de l'être est donc compris comme processus de dépassement de soi à partir duquel la transcendance de l'être – ou, comme le formule Heidegger, la fin des questions – est possible.

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Mots-clés : phénoménologie, transcendance, sens, possibilité, normativité, temporalité, pragmatisme, liberté.

Abstract:

This thesis takes its starting point from the early Heidegger's insight that the meaning of being must be sought through an ontological phenomenology, and specifically, through the existential analytic of Dasein and the destruction of the history of ontology, or, as I broadly construe it, the transcendence of Dasein and the transcendence of being. The study of the problem of transcendence is approached phenomenologically, that is to say, with a concern for the lived experience *as such* and the conditions of possibility of this experience, as well as the close and critical reading of Heidegger's works. I bring this approach to bear on my investigation of the problem of transcendence in Heidegger's corpus and to the debate between analytic (especially pragmatist) and continental scholarship within which I situate my study of Heidegger.

I present a phenomenology of the problem of transcendence that is also a phenomenology of meaning, possibility and normativity. Taking my lead from continental readers of Heidegger, I argue that the meaning of being can be understood as the problem of transcendence. The history of philosophy must be disrupted, deconstructed, and rethought such that the unthought path of philosophy is released. The way to the *other* beginning must be sought in transcendence *as such* – from the null-based call of conscience, to the authentic encounter with death and the disclosure of temporality, from the historical happening of being, and ultimately, to the refusal of being and the withdrawal of the nothing. The event of being is therefore a self-surpassing process from which the transcendence of being – indeed, the end of questions, as Heidegger puts it – is possible.

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Abbreviations

For all citations of Martin Heidegger's work I use abbreviated titles, followed by the page number. I use English translations of the German texts. When German pagination is given, the English page numbers always precede the German. Full bibliographical information is given of Heidegger's texts in the bibliography. For all other authors, full bibliographical information is given on the first mention of the work and in the bibliography. I use the following abbreviations to refer to Heidegger's works:

Abbreviations for works by Heidegger in English translation:

AM   *Aristotle's "Metaphysics": On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, trans Walter Brogan and Peter Warnek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995)

BT   *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962)

BP   *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982)

CP   *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012)

DM   *Discourse on Method*, trans. John M, Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966)

EP   "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking", trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972)

ER   *The Essence of Reasons*, trans. Terrence Malick (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969)

FC   *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995)

HC   *History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985)

IM   *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000)

KM   *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990)

MF   *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. Michael Heim (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984)

OWA "The Origin of the Work of Art", in *Basic Writings: Revised and expanded edition* ed. David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993)

QCT "The Question Concerning Technology", in *Basic Writings: Revised and expanded edition* ed. David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993)

TB "Time and Being", trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972)

WM "What is Metaphysics?", in *Basic Writings: Revised and expanded edition* ed. David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993)

Abbreviations for works by Heidegger in German:

AMK *Aristoteles, Metaphysik: Vom Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1981)

BZP *Beitrege zum Philosophy* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989)

GP *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Kostermann, 1975)

KPM *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1991)

ML *Metaphysische Anfangsgrunde der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978)

PG *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979)

SZ *Sein und Zeit* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977)

WG *Vom Wesen des Grundes* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1955, reprinted in *The Essence of Reasons: a bilingual Edition*, trans. Terrence Malick, 1969)

For two of my greatest joys:

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Introduction

How, what and why transcendence:

It is well known that Heidegger's *Being and Time*[1] is as much a provisional

attempt to pose the question of the meaning of being as it is the actual posing of the

question. Meaning has been so completely misconstrued by the history of thought that we

must, as Heidegger contends, deconstruct the history of misconception, disrupt the fixity

of our ordinary ways of thinking, and open a new way of understanding the meaning of

being. The fundamental question can really only be posed when the path of preparation

has released being for true disclosure. And yet, the preparatory path *is* the posing of the

question – there is no distinction between the destruction of the history of ontology and

the opening of being. The very thought that we must destruct the history of thought to

prepare the question *is itself* revealing. This, in a sense, is one of the great insights of

phenomenology – description is self-revealing. To push the point further – meaning is a

process of self-disclosure, a process from which being appears. It is this

phenomenological insight that led me to wonder about the self-surpassing character of

Dasein, and the basic transcendence of being. *How* I came to investigate the problem of

transcendence can be best understood through a series of questions. If the meaning of

being is a process, what is the nature of the (self-surpassing, transcendent) process? How

is what we *are* characterized by our *possibility* and by the ground of possibility? How do

we understand the meaning of being if being is always beyond itself, transcendent, and

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[1] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

not what it *is*? As I began reflecting on these questions, it became clear that transcendence appears at all levels of being, that it is a pre-reflective part of questioning the meaning of being, and in fact, it is the condition of possibility of asking questions *as such*. Transcendence is the ground of (raising the question of) the meaning of being. Thus, I argue that the question of the meaning of being (especially as it is understood by the Heidegger of *Being and Time*) can be understood as the problem of transcendence.

How I investigate the problem of transcendence is not unlike *how* I came to investigate the problem – by allowing the primordiality of questions to appear as I seek to describe the transcendent conditions of possibility of being. My methodology owes a great deal to Heidegger's phenomenological method, a method that aims to describe things *as they are* by allowing the meaning of things, and the question of meaning, to appear unencumbered by the self-evidence of metaphysical ideas. The questions I raise appear as an organic part of my path of investigation – in a sense, I follow the primordiality of questions that show themselves to me as I read, question, disrupt, reveal and conceal Heidegger's path of thought regarding the problem of transcendence. Moreover, the questions themselves prove to be self-disclosing as they reveal their situatedness within a critical context. In an effort to take issue with the (back)ground of my investigation, I interpret Heidegger's path and my own path within the relevant contexts. In this way as well, my method is phenomenological – interpretation is never *simply* interpretation and must take issue with itself for truth to be sought. As I read Heidegger, and re-read him within the context of critical debates, I attempt to let the gaps in questioning appear. Where I am exegetical, I aim to clarify the text in illuminating

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ways such that Heidegger's philosophy is given a fresh register from which it can be understood. To tailor Heidegger's phenomenological method to my thesis, I can therefore suppose the following: the problem of transcendence must be approached from a self-describing, self-transcending method, one that seeks to disclose the transcendence of what is not yet revealed.

To be clear, the *problem* of transcendence can be understood as the task of understanding something that is always beyond itself, always more than it is, and importantly, always what it is *not*. How, then, do we characterize something that *is* what it is *not*? How do we understand and describe this paradoxical being? How should we understand the nature of what it is *not*? Moreover, why *is* there something rather than *nothing*? How do we understand being in relation to nothing? And ultimately, how do we understand being inasmuch as it is *not* nothing and yet *should* be nothing? From a different perspective, the problem of transcendence can be construed as the problem of the ontological difference – *i.e.*, what is the ontological difference and how do we understand the gap of the difference? Yet another view shows us that the problem of transcendence can be interpreted as the problem of normativity – *i.e.*, how should a being that is *not* itself *be* itself? From yet a further vantage point, the problem of transcendence can be understood as the problem of relations (or of existential holism) – *i.e.*, what is a relation and how do we understand it *in relation* to a whole? *What*, then, is the problem of transcendence if it can be construed in so many ways? The point is not that the problem of transcendence is so broad such that anything can fit into it. Rather, the problem of transcendence is fundamental to and grounds all problems: *a problem is,*

essentially, a lack or a gap for which resolution must be (i.e., can only be) sought in the

surpassing or transcendence of the lack or gap. In this way all problems are inherently

bound to and basically characterized by the problem of transcendence – in effect, the

problem of transcendence is the ground of problems *as such*. With this in mind,

Heidegger's definition of transcendence from *The Essence of Reasons*[2] is illuminating:

> "Transcendence means surpassing. What executes the action of
> surpassing, and remains in the condition of surpassing, is
> transcendent (transcending). As a happening, surpassing is proper
> to being. As a condition, it can be formally construed as a
> "relationship" that stretches "from" something "to" something. To
> surpassing, then, belongs that *toward which* the surpassing
> occurs, and which is usually but improperly called the
> "transcendent." And finally, *something* is always surpassed in
> surpassing […] [Transcendence] is the surpassing that makes
> anything like existence and thereby movement in space possible
> in the first place."[3]

From this excerpt and many more, it is clear that Heidegger himself prioritizes the

problem of transcendence as a basic problem of being, and furthermore, that the problem

appears in two basic ways: as the transcendence of Dasein and as the transcendence of

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[2] Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Reasons*, trans. Terrence Malick (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969).

[3] ER 35-37/VWG 34-36

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being. Broadly construed, the Heidegger of *Being and Time* is interested in the transcendence of Dasein while the later Heidegger is interested in the transcendence of being. The two instances of transcendence are, however, closely related and ultimately thought within the problem of transcendence: the transcendence of Dasein is a necessary part of the path to the transcendence of being (*i.e.*, to the disclosure of the other beginning). To break the point down in more detail, the Heidegger of *Being and Time* reveals that Dasein *can* understand its basic character of transcendence (*i.e.*, the fact that it is always more than it is, a fact disclosed in the authentic encounter with death), and thus, Dasein can *transcend* itself – this is the transcendence of Dasein. The transcendence of Dasein is a necessary path of the destruction of the history of ontology, a history from which being must be released for truth to appear as a possibility. In order to understand transcendence *as such*, we must understand the site from which transcendence is first understood. Or in other words, to reveal the other beginning of philosophy, we must first investigate the being who thinks philosophy and for whom philosophy matters. In short, *Ereignis* can only be thought by the unconcealment of temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*]. Thus, the reason *why* the problem of transcendence has priority not only in the primordiality of problems, but also in Heidegger's philosophical path is because the meaning of being can be (and perhaps *must* be) sought from within the problem of transcendence.

A general summary of the chapters:

My central claim, that the question of the meaning of being can be understood as the problem of transcendence, is directly situated within at least one prominent Heideggerian debate, namely, the debate between analytic and continental philosophers.

Taking this into account in the first chapter, I introduce the question of how we should determine Heidegger's understanding of meaning [*Sinn*], and contextualize my investigation within the analytic (especially pragmatist) and continental debate. I will show that many pragmatist critics argue that meaning should be understood practically and that priority should be given to (the ordinary, average everyday human activity of) understanding [*Verständnis*] (or what we *can* do), an argument they base in the claim that human activity is the most phenomenologically revealing part of existence. However, other critics argue that the human activity of understanding is itself grounded in a more passive condition: the fact that existence is always part of a meaningful process, within a mattering world, discovering itself pressing into possibilities. Heidegger's name for this passive condition is facticity [*Faktizität*]. As the latter critics see it, human activity *is* phenomenologically revealing inasmuch as it shows us the passive ground, or facticity, from which activity and understanding are possible.

I thus enter into the pragmatist and continental debate with a specific problem in mind – to understand the relation between activity and passivity, what is shown and not shown, what *is* and *is not*, revealing and concealing. In other words, my interest in the pragmatist and continental debate is not only in how my investigation participates in the context of Heideggerian scholarship, but more importantly, in how the debate itself can help clarify the problem of transcendence. The first chapter therefore opens one of the main questions of my dissertation, a question which itself is characterized by the problem of transcendence, that is, how should we read Heidegger? Notably, how we should read Heidegger precedes the question of how we should conceptualize Heidegger's

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understanding of meaning. More to the point, how we should read Heidegger *is* the question of how we should understand Heidegger, and thus, the question of reading Heidegger is bound throughout my dissertation to the problem of transcendence. In this way, the path introduced in the first chapter is carried on throughout the dissertation. As I explore various questions in the following chapters, questions concerning such topics as meaning, the 'not', the nothing, normativity, and temporality, I will continue to situate my investigation within the pragmatist and continental debate. To motivate my investigation in this chapter, I will primarily refer to *Being and Time* and the surrounding works such as *History of the Concept of Time*[4] and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*[5].

In the second chapter, I deepen the path of reading introduced in the previous chapter by more directly investigating the relation between revealing and concealing, a topic that will bring us into contact with some of the later and older Heidegger's works[6]. I argue that the later Heidegger's discussion of the (transcendent and historically situated) relation between revealing and concealing *as such* (or what *is* and is *not*), a relation he characterizes as *Ereignis*, can be helpful to clarify how the Heidegger of *Being and Time* understands meaning. A reading that takes into consideration Heidegger's corpus can offer fresh insight into specific periods of Heidegger's works (periods such as the

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[4] Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

[5] Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

[6] I use Theodore Kisiel's helpful guide to periodizing Heidegger's career. See: Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), *xiii*.

Heidegger of *Being and Time*). I will argue that the thematization of passivity so evidently worked out in the later Heidegger is part of the path of thought initiated in the early Heidegger.

The second chapter therefore explores the meaning of *Ereignis* as pragmatist and continental readers understand it, a discussion that will begin to show us the continuity to their respective paths of thought, and to highlight the inherent limitations to pragmatism. To be clear, the pragmatist way of thought, a path that takes practical and functional activity as self-evident, will more clearly show its phenomenological inadequacies. In response, I will argue that only a reading that prioritizes possibility and the ground of possibility (*i.e.*, what is *not* possible) is prepared to open a discussion of the problem of transcendence. The meaning of being can only be re-thought by a process of reflection that takes issue with concealment. With this in mind, I will examine Heidegger's discussion of the 'not' [*Nicht*], how being is fundamentally characterized by the 'not', and the possibility of an authentic encounter with the 'not' through the work of art and through a phenomenological relation to technology. We will discover that the authentic encounter with the 'not' – or in other words, the possibility of revealing the concealment of being – is in fact something we *should* do inasmuch as it is a fundamental part of what we are (and *must* be). My discussion in this chapter will refer to later works such as *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*[7], "The Question Concerning Technology"[8],

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[7] Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012)

[8] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *Basic Writings: from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, ed. David Farrell Krell, 311-341 (London: Routledge, 2000).

"The Origin of the Work of Art"[9], "Time and Being"[10] and "The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking"[11].

Pressing further into the idea that what we are *not* is (part of) what we *should* be, in the third chapter I focus on the question of normativity especially as it is discussed in *Being and Time*. Like the question of meaning, there is some debate regarding what Heidegger means by normativity. Pragmatist critics, for example, understand normativity as an extension of their understanding of (average everyday) meaning – most of the time, what we understand we can do, and what we *can* do we *should* do. The key to the pragmatist notion of Heideggerian normativity is found in their conception of understanding as a type of sense-making or interpretation determined by the average way of being. According to the pragmatist, averageness therefore determines normativity, and it does so for the preservation of the functionality of shared practices.

On the other hand, other critics argue that the pragmatist understanding of normativity conceals a deeper point, namely, that existentiell normativity is presupposed by existential normativity (announced by the call of conscience), which itself is grounded in ontological normativity (understood as a passive withdrawal of being). The 'not' and the nothing [*Nichts*] will motivate my investigation into ontological normativity – an effort that will be informed by my previous examination of *Ereignis*. I will argue that

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[9] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Basic Writings: from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, ed. David Farrell Krell, 143-203 (London: Routledge, 2000).

[10] Martin Heidegger, "Time and Being," in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, 1-24 (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972).

[11] Martin Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, 55-73 (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972).

Heidegger's discussion of normativity in *Being and Time* can be interpreted as already attempting to disclose the happening of being as it is historically situated, and that traces of the later Heidegger's interest in the transcendence of being and thinking the unthought, *other* beginning of philosophy can be found in Heidegger's discussion of the transcendence of Dasein in his earlier works. The third chapter will therefore show that transcendence, understood as the meaning of being, is characterized by possibility, a possibility that first appears to us from the call of conscience, which itself appears from the non-determinable, self-secluding ground of the 'not'. The 'not', in turn, echoes the unmasterable nothing– what being is *not* and *should* be. In addition to *Being and Time*, my discussion in this chapter will refer to "What is Metaphysics?"[12] especially when I investigate the nothing.

How do the various parts of my narrative thus far connect? How does meaning, nothing and normativity relate to each other? What is the condition of possibility of our path of reading? We will discover that underpinning what we *are* and are *not*, what *is* and is *not*, what we *should* and should *not* be is one basic condition: time. In the fourth and final chapter, I will bring our discussion to bear on temporality as it is discussed in *Being and Time*, and argue that the transcendence of temporality is crucial to the possibility of freedom. Following the pattern and path of the previous chapters, I will explore the pragmatist understanding of temporality, an understanding characterized by the view that humans determine temporality. By contrast, other critics argue that the pragmatist view of temporality misses the important point: humans do *not* determine time, but rather,

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[12] Martin Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?," in *Basic Writings: from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, ed. David Farrell Krell, 93-110 (London: Routledge, 2000).

humans are passively delivered to the temporal process. The self-transcendence of temporality appropriates being for the preservation of the historical process (i.e., for the process of transcendence). In short, transcendence as such is the event of being. I will primarily refer to *Being and Time* and *The Essence of Reasons* to motivate my inquiry in this chapter.

From this discussion, we will discover that understanding being as a process of transcendence (i.e., as appropriated by and preserving the self-transcending process of being) *frees* being to be thought for the first time. In other words, understanding the meaning of being as the problem of transcendence is a necessary part of the path to the other beginning of philosophy. The topic of freedom opens a final question, that is, the question of responsibility. Are we responsible for what we are not, for what we cannot be, for what we cannot master? I conclude with a reflection on the notion of passivity and the extent to which we are responsible for our passivity, a reflection that suggests that responsibility is not a choice, but, like being itself, it is a gift we are granted. Ultimately, our responsibility is assumed in how we receive the granting, and how we surrender to its withdrawal.

1   *Reading Heidegger on Meaning*

Introduction:

In the present chapter, I will *introduce* the question: what is the meaning of

'meaning' [*Sinn*] in the early Heidegger and especially in the Heidegger of *Being and*

Time? What I introduce here will be developed over the course of the dissertation. In a

sense, the question of the meaning of 'meaning' is bound to the problem of transcendence

– in other words, the problem of understanding how something goes beyond itself, or, as

one critic puts it, how to describe the nature of something that is always more than what it

is.[1] Indeed, the meaning of 'meaning' will unfold as I bring the problem of transcendence

to light, and, along my path of investigation, I will ultimately discover that the problem of

transcendence reveals the meaningful relation between being[2] and nothing. The main goal

of this chapter is narrower or more preparatory in nature; to be precise *the goal is to come*

to an understanding of how we should read Heidegger on meaning such that we can

establish what Heidegger means by 'meaning'.

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[1] This idea is developed in Iain Macdonald's "'What Is, Is More than It Is': Adorno and Heidegger on the Priority of Possibility" (Iain Macdonald, "'What Is, Is More Than It Is': Adorno and Heidegger on the Priority of Possibility," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol. 19 (2011): 31-57) and is widely discussed in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992)).

[2] One common way of distinguishing the levels of primordiality of being is to use 'Being' to represent the most fundamental, ontological condition and 'being' when discussing particular beings or ways of being. One of the main points of this dissertation, however, is that all levels of being are characterized by transcendence. Indeed, transcendence is one way to understand the meaning of being. As such, the distinction between levels of being should be replaced by a representation of the distinction between levels of openness (to the transcendent process). Relatedly, I want to collapse the division between ontic and ontological understandings of being and find new ways of articulating the levels of primordiality. For these reasons, I do not ascribe to the Macquarrie and Robinson standard, but rather use only the lower case 'being' in order to represent the self-transcendiing interplay of all levels of being. The one exception is when I am quoting Heidegger's texts; in these cases I quote the original translation rather than make a translator's modification.

The chapter is divided into three sections. In order to provide a preliminary background for the reader (an introductory approach I will repeat in other chapters), I will present an outline of Heidegger's notion of 'understanding' [*Verständnis*] for two basic reasons. First, whatever meaning *means* for Heidegger, it is clear that it has something to do with understanding and not to be confused with theoretical knowledge or cognition.[3] Second, I will layout central terms and ideas in the early Heidegger in order to facilitate the pragmatist debate discussed in the following two sections. I will follow Heidegger's phenomenological method by beginning my basic introduction to 'meaning' at the level of the average everyday – that is, the way we find things most of the time, most ordinarily, in our daily lives – while keeping in mind the deeper goal of revealing a fundamental description of meaning. From my investigation, I will show that transcendence occurs at even the most banal level of meaning.

In the second section, I will introduce a few leading analytic, especially pragmatist, readings of the early Heidegger. The goal in this section is to familiarize the reader with the main trends in pragmatist treatments and to consider the arguments as I begin to shape my reading of Heidegger, a reading I will form throughout the dissertation as I continue to engage with pragmatist readings (and other critics) of Heidegger. I will show that pragmatist readings tend to focus on the practical orientation of *the understanding* [*Verständnis*].[4] That is to say, they find that the most basic human quality

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[3] BT 99/SZ 69

[4] See for example William Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2013); Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in Being and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-*

is the fact that we are always actively engaged in the world *with some purpose or practical intention*. Therefore, our essentially purposeful condition is, for many pragmatists, the meaning of being. The section will introduce us to a foremost debate between analytic and continental (or more generally, non-pragmatist) readings of Heidegger. Working my way through the debate will help shape my own reading of Heidegger.

The third section will therefore open up a different way to read Heidegger. While pragmatists tend to prioritize the activity of the understanding [*Verständnis*], another way to approach the question of meaning is to consider (at least on equal grounds to understanding [*Verständnis*]) the fundamental character of state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] and the passivity of mood [*Stimmung*]. The section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection continues to look at pragmatist readings, this time on how they treat Heidegger's discussion of mood. The second subsection introduces a counterview to pragmatist arguments, specifically, that moods are the most fundamental existential condition.[5] In other words, the fact that humans always live a life that matters to them reveals the basic condition that humans are always disposed to participating (willingly or unwillingly) in the movement of a meaningful life. The fact that humans are predisposed to participating in a life that matters to them in a variety of ways betrays an underlying

the-world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997); Mark Wrathall, *How To Read Heidegger* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006).

[5] See for example Matthew Ratcliffe, "Why Mood Matters," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*, ed. Mark A. Wrathall, 157-176 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Josh Michael Hayes, "Being-affected: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the pathology of truth," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 156-173 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

passivity. The underlying passivity is our facticity [*Faktizität*]. Our predisposition to finding things more or less mattering is what Heidegger means by *state-of-mind*. That things matter in the way they matter is determined by what Heidegger calls *mood*. The critics I discuss in the second subsection therefore argue that, because things can only be understood in a world that matters, and a mattering world appears because of moods, state-of-mind and mood are more primordial than understanding and interpretation. The contrast between the different readings will be interesting to investigate; through the comparison, fresh insight and new paths of reading will hopefully reveal themselves.

In conclusion, I will reconsider the path of pragmatist and non-pragmatist thought from a deeper perspective, namely, the path of thought that withdraws from and refuses both paths of investigation. Leading into the second chapter, I will introduce another way of reading Heidegger, one that thematizes the essential passivity from which possibility arises.[6] I will present, in a rudimentary fashion, the argument that the basic feature of passivity *is* the ground from which possibility, meaning and the transcendence of being appears.

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[6] My argument is greatly influenced by Thomas Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 42-68 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Section 1: What does Heidegger say about average everyday meaning? – A general overview with an emphasis on understanding (*Verständnis*)

Heidegger contends that the human being is first and foremost instrumentally oriented towards its world and "understands itself at first and usually from things."[7] Heidegger's term for the human being, *Dasein*, reflects this self-transcending feature inasmuch as the term literally translates as 'there-being'. Dasein is always beyond itself, *more* than *it is*, or *beyond* what *it is*, insofar as it is equipmentally involved with things in the world. It is the discovering from which appropriation (of the implicit network of interrelated significance of which it is a part) is disclosed. As Heidegger describes:

> A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability [*Dienlichkeit*], conduciveness [*Beiträglichkeit*], usability [*Verwendbarkeit*], manipulability [*Handlichkeit*]. In the 'in-order-to' as a structure there lies an *assignment* or *reference* of something to something.[8]

We encounter things as workable, pliable or, as Heidegger terms, ready-to-hand [*zuhanden*], and not as naked, natural, present-at-hand [*vorhanden*] objects. Indeed, even theoretical grasping and ideology are ready-to-hand.[9] Heidegger therefore characterizes things-in-the-world as equipment. Things have meaning only insofar as they are always already understood as important 'in order to' [*um…zu*] accomplish some task or aim. Heidegger maintains:

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[7] BP 289, GP 409

[8] BT 97, SZ 68

[9] BT 95/SZ 67

Taken strictly, there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there are always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to…' ["etwas um-zu…"].[10]

Notably, in average everydayness, Dasein is not conscious of the meaning of its world; even less is it aware of the inner interrelatedness of the world's significance. Dasein acts and interacts with objects in the world always already understanding that they are what they are in a context of relations related to Dasein's projects, and always already interpreting its understanding by using the objects. However, Dasein's pre-ontological understanding and interpretation [*Auslegung*] conceal the 'in order to' structure of the ready-to-hand world. Thus, the reason Dasein has the ability to seamlessly move from one task to another in the ready-to-hand mode, the reason Dasein has the pre-reflective ability to cope with and master its surroundings is that the existential structure of understanding operates *implicitly* most of the time.

To use one critic's example[11] (an example I will revisit in other chapters), a woman can be putting her child to sleep, drinking a Scotch, and making a business call at the same time.[12] The possibilities open to this woman appear alongside her multi-faceted

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[10] BT 97, SZ 68

[11] Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 55. I find Sheehan's example both clear and versatile in the way that it intimates different levels of meaning. For this reason, I will use it as an ongoing example throughout my dissertation.

[12] Sheehan's example is the following: "Each human world or meaningful context discloses to understanding the meanings that can accrue to whatever is found within that world. The world is a set of possible relations that link tools to tasks, and subjects to predicates, thereby providing things with their significance. In the context of a downpour, for example, a piece of rough canvas has a different significance from what it might have if it showed up in an elegant living room. Human beings live in many distinct meaning-giving worlds at the same time. A mother, for instance, makes business calls from home

absorption in her immediate tasks. As she picks up errant baby clothes strewn on the floor, dabs at the spilt milk pooling on the table, discusses problems in office restructuring, and pours herself more alcohol, the handiness of the world is appropriated. The significance of the network of relations within which she maneuvers implicitly refers to a range of possible tasks, which she may or may not use. I will introduce two points here. In the first place, the woman's appropriation of her environment is entirely seamless owing to her pre-reflective understanding. Secondly, and this is an issue I will return to frequently, the world is not set into motion solely by her practical interests (this is a typically pragmatic reading). The possible handiness of the liquor bottle, the hands-free mobile phone, and the rocking crib are not (only) determined by the woman – they are always already part of the structure of the world into which she is thrown. Though *it appears as though the woman determines her world* inasmuch as it seems *up to her* how things can and will be used, what things are most needed, how things should be arranged such that she can be a mother and business manager and someone who enjoys unwinding, in fact, or in Heideggerian terms, because of our facticity, *there is very little that is actively within the woman's control* (*i.e.*, the woman is not in control in a deterministic sense, but rather she is passively embedded in her factical situation). Her interpretation of her environment is, first and foremost, circumscribed by the pre-reflective, instrumental

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in the evening while rocking her child to sleep and enjoying a Scotch. Each of those world – her job, her parenting, her desire to relax – has the function of providing a range of possible sense-making relations within its semantic field" (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 55).

understanding, which itself is narrowed (or as one critic puts it, *deployed*)[13] by the circumspection of concern. Put simply, much of what she does is not really her choice.

Moving now to an ontic level, understanding has "the significance of 'being able to manage something', 'being a match for it', 'being competent to do something'."[14] The woman's pre-ontological understanding enables her to be unaware of the readiness-to-hand of the crib and pacifier, of the telephone, of the bottle of whisky. She can be many things at once without distraction. On an ontological level, the understanding allows us to disclose both what is ontologically possible and manageable (and how), and what is not. Understanding is the condition of possibility for Dasein to cope with its environment. It is because of the existential condition of understanding that the woman is able to master the particular surrounding of her home and work space and that she always already have the possibility of coping with any environment. "Dasein is such that in every case it has understood (or alternatively, not understood) that it is to be thus or thus. As such understanding it 'knows' *what* it is capable of – that is, what is potentiality-for-Being is capable of."[15] In other words, the "disclosedness of understanding, as the disclosedness of the "for-the-sake-of-which" and of significance equiprimordially, pertains to the entirety of Being-in-the-world."[16] If understanding pertains to the entirety of being-in-the-world, and the meaning of entities in the world is determined by understanding, then

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[13] Macdonald, "What Is, Is More than It Is," 38.

[14] BT 183, SZ 143

[15] BT 184, SZ 144

[16] BT 182, SZ 143

the meaning of equipment is necessarily disclosive of the meaning of being-in-the-world
and the existential structure of Dasein. The woman's ready-to-hand involvement with
equipment in general discloses the fact that she is the type of being who not only has a
pre-reflective understanding of the world, but also that she is the type of being who
necessarily tends to engage with the world purposefully, and who is therefore
(ontologically) a being of possibility. Therefore, understanding opens up possibility for
Dasein.

In opening up possibility for Dasein, understanding has the structure of
projection. Heidegger states that "[w]ith equal primordiality the understanding projects
Dasein's being upon its "for-the-sake-of-which" and upon significance, as the worldhood
of its current world."[17] As such, understanding as an existentiale – *i.e.,* a basic feature of
being human – always already projects a future of possibilities. "As projecting,
understanding is the kind of Being of Dasein in which it *is* its possibilities as
possibilities."[18] Since Dasein is disclosed to itself in understanding, the projection of
understanding discloses Dasein to itself as a being with future possibilities (as well as
past possibilities) and thus, a being that is pre-ontologically ahead of and beyond itself. If
Dasein is structurally projection and always already opening up a future of possibilities,
then we already begin to see that transcendence is implicated in the meaning of being at
least passively speaking. The challenge for phenomenology, as Heidegger sees it, is to

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[17] BT 185, SZ 145

[18] BT 185, SZ 145

describe the structural transcendence of Dasein fundamentally thus rendering transcendence explicit.

Returning now to the multi-tasking woman, she is always already in the throw of interpretations as she puts to use, or again *deploys*, her understanding. Interpretation is the working out of understanding or articulation of the possibilities disclosed in understanding. Interpretation discovers the world, which is already there and understood, but not yet made explicit. She can rock her baby to sleep and drink her Scotch because she pre-reflectively understands these possibilities and because the world is disposed to being appropriated in such a multifaceted manner. When she manages an office complaint on the phone, she actualizes what the phone is for – an instrument of her managerial responsibilities, which she uses in-order-to affect authority and achieve office harmony while attending to her family and herself. Therefore, when Dasein interprets it reveals the 'in-order-to' structure of what is already understood:

> "All preparing, putting to rights, repairing, improving, rounding-out, are accomplished in the following way: we take apart in its "in-order-to" that which is circumspectively ready-to-hand, and we concern ourselves with it in accordance with what becomes visible through this process. That which has been circumspectively taken apart with regard to its "in-order-to", and taken apart as such – that which is *explicitly* understood – has the structure of *something as something.*"[19]

[19] BT 189, SZ 148-149

Interpretation is grounded in what Heidegger calls the fore-structure of understanding. The fore-structure discloses first that Dasein is always already engaged in a totality of involvements and significant possibilities; second, that Dasein always already understands and makes sense of a general environment in which we find our object of interpretation; third, that Dasein always already approaches or interprets things from a particular perspective, with a particular intent, understanding and conceptualization. These three structures of interpretation are what Heidegger calls fore-having [*Vorhabe*], fore-sight [*Vorsicht*] and fore-conception [*Vorgriff*]. In articulating these structures, he contends that:

> "In every case this interpretation is grounded in *something we have in advance*, in a *fore-having*… When something is understood but is still veiled, it becomes unveiled by an act of appropriation, and this is always done under the guidance of a point of view… *fore-sight*. [I]nterpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving it, either with finality or with reservations; it is grounded in *something we grasp in advance* – in a *fore-conception*."[20]

To reprise the example, the woman is able to interpret a multitude of objects as useful (or not) because she is always already embedded in a totality of involvements and has a general ability to engage practically and cope with the world (fore-having). Also, she always already understands the particular work environment in which she understands and may interpret the relevant objects. Child care area, work place, home –

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[20] BT 191, SZ 150

whatever her concern circumscribes, her environment is a shifting play of possibilities. Likewise, the objects in her environment are deployed appropriately – her glass of Scotch can be an encumbrance if she needs both hands to care for her child, or it can be a handy paperweight as she sifts through work documents. The point is not that the objects are freed only according to the woman's needs and desires – this remains an overly dualistic description. The main point is that the world is a network of significant relations and Dasein is part of the network. There is no independent object, there is no thing isolated from other things and Dasein. All things are embedded in the web of relations. This is to say that the environment is appropriately reserved for the woman's sliding interests (fore-sight). From the fore-having and the fore-sight of the understanding, it is possible for the woman to interpret her environment from a particular conception, with particular intentions (fore-conception). Thus, the fore-structure releases specific possibilities from the play of general possibilities. It deploys the handy object *as* a handy object, lifting it out of the background of handy equipment.

Interestingly, although the fore-structure of understanding enables the woman to specify her interpretation, it also consequently conceals the play of possible interpretations and the totality of involvements upon which her understanding is founded. Since the fore-structure directs her involvement with objects from a particular standpoint and with a particular intent and conceptualization, the fore-structure of the understanding conceals the other interpretations she may have actualized. These other interpretations, given in the woman's pre-reflective understanding, are covered up when she appropriates her environment with a specific, albeit multi-tasking, intention. The fore-structure of the

understanding is therefore the possibility of Dasein's interpretive involvement with the

world, yet also the reason that Dasein falls further away from an authentic understanding

[*eigentliches Verstehen*] (*i.e.,* a self-revealing understanding or a fundamental disclosure)

of the possibility of its being.

To repeat the salient features of this section, Dasein is characterized by an

existential condition on the basis of which interpretation is possible. Dasein primarily

understands and interprets its world in the mode of readiness-to-hand, which means that

Dasein for the most part functions efficiently and practically with its surroundings. The

interpretation of the ready-to-hand world has the structure of 'in-order-to' or, in other

words, is determined by use. Moreover, interpretation is grounded in a fore-structure,

which opens up or projects the possibility for Dasein to interact with entities in the world

from a particular conceptualization. Therefore, the meaning of entities is determined by

the existential condition of understanding and, consequently, by the way Dasein

interprets the ready-to-hand world in terms of use.[21] Understanding discloses the meaning

of possibility of both entities and the being that has the potentiality of understanding. In

understanding, we grasp the essence of things as always already referentially significant

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[21] As one commentator puts it: "Meaning is that which enables us to understand things as they are – that is, in their essential being. *The meaning does not originally lie in words*, *or in things* [my emphasis], but in the remarkable structure of our understanding itself. We move in advance in a horizon of understanding, from which and in reference to which the things we meet are intelligible to us as so and so and as such and such. The world of our own existence is the horizon from which we primarily understand things as relevant to a purpose… The modifications in the horizon of our understanding enable us to understand things in different ways, but in each case only in one or another of their possibilities" (Magda King, *A Guide To Heidegger's Being and Time* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001), 7). Magda King's description of meaning and understanding is of interest to me here not only for its clarity, but also and more importantly, for its overarching view of meaning, things and language.

and it is precisely this 'in order to' significance, which we call 'meaning'. Heidegger

himself puts it as follows:

> Entities within-the-world generally are projected upon the world –
> that is, upon a whole of significance, to whose reference-relations
> concern, as Being-in-the-world, has been tied up on advance.
> When entities within-the-world are discovered along with the
> Being of Dasein – that is, when they have come to be understood
> – we say that they have *meaning* [*Sinn*]… *Meaning is that*
> *wherein the intelligibility [Verständlichkeit] of something*
> *maintains itself.*[22] (My italics)

Therefore, inquiring into the meaning of entities is to analyze in part the

existential structure of the meaning of being. The type of being who is capable of

equipmentally coping with its environment nevertheless remains an issue. We will

discover in the next section and in the following chapters that there are many, sometimes

conflicting, ways of interpreting the meaning of entities and the meaning of the being

who is, for the most part, self-forgetting. I will ultimately argue, however, that

underpinning (and fundamentally connecting) the various ways of interpreting being is

the basic character of transcendence.

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[22] BT 192-193, SZ 151

Section 2: The pragmatist version of meaning (the primacy of interpretation or prioritizing projection)

The meaning of 'meaning', especially as it appears in the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, is a well-known and debated topic between analytic and continental philosophers. Many analytic critics argue that meaning should be understood pragmatically and that priority should be given to the understanding [*Verständnis*] since it is the most phenomenologically revealing. Hubert Dreyfus, for example, prioritizes the understanding and discusses it as as a type of know-how or coping where a thing is meaningful inasmuch as the human being is able to cope with it and knows how to use it.[23] William Blattner reifies Dreyfus' know-how-model and argues that the scope of human know-how is demonstrated by assertion;[24] therefore, meaning is found in the

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[23] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 184.

[24] To be certain, before William Blattner, Ernst Tugendhat made a similar argument concerning language, although Tugendhat's philosophical motivations concern truth and falsehood rather than understanding and interpretation. Since this is not the focus of my dissertation, I will briefly present the debate surrounding Tugendhat's work. Tugendhat argues that Heidegger's notion of the correspondence theory of truth is narrow, as it does not properly consider the complex correspondence entailed by philosophical doctrines such as transcendental idealism. Tugendhat's main claim is that Heidegger's notion of truth as *aletheia*, truth as the uncovering of the things themselves, is not a meaningful notion of truth. As Tugendhat clarifies, if truth is disclosure, then there is no way of determining truth from falsehood, and, he stresses, truth is only meaningful in relation to its opposite, falsehood. Therefore, if Heidegger redefines truth as uncovering, as a non-verifiable phenomenon, then truth is no longer actually *true*. See Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967). For commentary on the debate opened by Tugendhat, a debate to which Blattner belongs, see Rufus Duits, "On Tugendhat's Analysis of Heidegger's Concept of Truth," *Internaltion Journal of Philosophical Studies* 2, Vol. 15 (June 2007): Vol: 207-223. Duits attempts to clarify the ambiguity of meaning with which Tugendhat charges Heidegger by contextualizing Heidegger's notion of truth in a post-metaphysical framework. He explores the outer limits of *Verfallen*, the fall, as the ontological counterpart to *truth as aletheia*. While Duits' does excellent work in displaying Tugendhat's rootedness in metaphysical presuppositions, and furthermore, in clarifying Heidegger's opaque discussion of truth and untruth, his attempt to clarify a distinction in the ambiguity of Heidegger's determination of meaning is a self-blinding pursuit. Meaning *is* ambiguous and its ambiguity is precisely why truth is not a question of correspondence, of linguistic reference, nor idealism. It is not even a question of existential conditions. Truth, viewed ambiguously, is ontological. The question of normativity in Heidegger is another widely debated topic, a topic which has at least two parts – is there normativity in Heidegger and if so, how do we understand Heidegger's normativity? I will address these questions in the

cognitive process of linguistic expression.[25] Taylor Carman mitigates the coping-model

and Blattner's assertion-model by attempting to mediate between the pragmatist view of

understanding as practical activity and the hermeneutic view of understanding as basic

interpretation.[26] The result is a hybrid view (which tends towards pragmatism) in which

Carman asserts that understanding is demonstrated by human expression. Mark Wrathall,

on the other hand, advances a deeper view of pragmatism. He contends that

understanding is really found in the underlying discursive structure of human activity,

from which articulation [*Gliederung*] is possible. Wrathall argues that the primary

function of interpretation is not practical (though this is a byproduct of its primary

function), but rather, it is a function of the understanding – the condition of possibility of

the projection of possibility.

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third chapter. To explore the expanding body of literature available on the question of normativity, see for example: Robert B. Brandom, "Heidegger's Categories in *Sein und Zeit*," in *Tales of the Mighty Dead: Historical Essays in the Metaphysics of Intentionality*, 298-323 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Steven Crowell, "*Sorge* or *Selbstbewußtsein*? Heidegger and Korsgaard on the Sources of Normativity," *European Journal of Philosophy* 3, vol. 15 (2007): 315-333; Steven Crowell, *Normativity and Phenomenology in Husserl and Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Beatrice Han-Pile, "Freedom and the "Choice to Choose Oneself," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*, ed. Mark. A Wrathall, 291-319 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); William Blattner, "Authenticity and Resoluteness," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*, ed. Mark. A Wrathall, 320-337 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Charles B. Guignon, "Authenticity, moral values, and psychotherapy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon, 215-239 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Iain Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity: Conscience and Non-Identity in Heidegger and Adorno, with a Glance at Hegel," in *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions*, ed. Iain Macdonald and Krzysztof Ziarek, 6-21 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Mark A. Wrathall and James Faulconer, *Appropriating Heidegger* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Lambert Zuidervaart, "Truth and Authentication: Heidegger and Adorno in Reverse," in *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions*, ed. Iain Macdonald and Krzysztof Ziarek, 22-46 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

[25] See Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 92-98.

[26] See Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 20-22.

On the other hand, other critics insist that meaning arises from a foundation that resists the pragmatist reading. They argue that the fact that humans always live a life that matters is an example of the *fact of their meaningfulness* or, as Heidegger calls it, *facticity* [*Fakticität*]. The fact that this life matters cannot be overcome – it *is* the fact as long as *one lives*. A basic condition of human life is that we do not choose to matter or to have things matter. We *always* find that life matters. Finding ourselves amidst this mattering existence is what Heidegger calls our thrownness [*Geworfenheit*]. The passivity of our submission to a meaningful world is the ground for the very same meaningful world to appear. Thus, critics such as Matthew Ratcliffe argue that all understanding and interpretation, all action and projection are second order conditions that presuppose a deeper constitutional factor, that is, the passivity and thrownness of state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] and moods [*Stimmung*].

With such varying, often conflicting, versions of Heidegger, we must ask: *How, then, should we read Heidegger?* Before working through my reading of 'meaning' – *a reading that understands the transcendence of possibility as the space within which meaning appears* – I will look at a few of the main pragmatist readings of Heidegger's discussion of 'meaning' (especially in *Being and Time*) for two reasons.

First, I will explore different readings to gain insight from the path of reflection and from the dialogical exchanges between the various readings. The pragmatist view of Heidegger is not only one of the leading themes in Heideggerian scholarship, but also an interesting conversation to explore as a context to my own reading and to my interest in

the problem of transcendence. Therefore, to properly prepare the path for my argument on how I will read Heidegger, an overview of the context must be laid out.

Second, all readings come from a context, including my own. Heidegger argues that the destruction of the history of ontology is necessary to free the question of the meaning of being from misconception. In other words, to get to true understanding, misunderstandings must be revealed. Following this rationale, it is important to review possible misconceptions of Heidegger's project with the goal of freeing the question of the meaning of 'meaning' in the early Heidegger. To put it in relation with the first point, contexts must be revealed for a true, or authentic, reading to be possible. Therefore, we must enter into a conversation with the context as a way of freeing ourselves from the self-concealment of a hidden context.

The primary goal of the present chapter is to lay out how we should characterize 'meaning' in order to begin developing my thesis that the meaning of being can be understood from the perspective of the problem of transcendence. Related to this, my secondary objective is to begin to clarify the reasons that pragmatist readings of Heidegger are untenable. *To restate my thesis in new terms, I will argue for the importance of transcendence in relation to the question of the meaning of being (a view that shows the pragmatist position is flawed), and furthermore, I will clarify the essence of transcendence as possibility – possibility which arises from the uncircumscribable 'nothing'.*

My investigation into pragmatist readings begins with Gilbert Ryle's 1929 review of *Being and Time*[27] and Rudolf Carnap's 1939 essay "The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language"[28] not so much for chronological reasons,[29] but more importantly because I believe it is impossible to avoid addressing some of the issues they raise. Neither critic advances an interpretation of 'meaning' (quite the opposite in Carnap's case), and it might therefore seem unnecessary to begin here. However, Ryle and Carnap *do* set the stage for discussions of the meaning of 'meaning'. In fact, it is arguable that all readers of Heidegger *must* contend with the questions they ask. For example, one point Ryle advances is that Heidegger forces on us a new terminology, which both resembles and is intended to disrupt our implicit understanding of certain everyday terms.[30] The difficulty becomes decoding familiar terms in the context of

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[27] Gilbert Ryle, "Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*," in *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, 53-64 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

[28] Rudolph Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language," in *Logical Positivism*, ed. A.J. Ayer, 60-81 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978).

[29] Part of the path I follow is detailed in Lee Braver's helpful breakdown of four analytic reactions to Heidegger. The path I follow is not intended to be a chronological one, but rather one that represents a progression of ideas. See Lee Braver, "Analyzing Heidegger: a history of analytic reactions to Heidegger," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 235-255 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[30] This is not, however, Ryle's only, or even main, point in the book review. He raises other issues such as the criticism that Heidegger's phenomenological method presupposes a theory of knowledge. He writes: "In the first place it is taken for self-evident that some sort of *understanding* what I do and am belongs essentially to my doing what I do and being what I am… But while there is no objection to the thesis that I can know my own experiences and the 'I' who has them, the assertion that this is all that I can know, or that if I can know anything else I can only know it if I first know my experiences and my 'I', is far from self-evident; indeed it seems to me to contradict itself. At any rate it presupposes a theory of knowledge and a metaphysic, and so a Phenomenology based on this theory is not presuppositionless." (Ryle, "Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*," 61-62) Other analytic philosophers take up a few of Ryle's criticisms, but for my present purposes, I only want to highlight the issue concerning terminology. The point is that even readings of Heidegger, such as my own, which disagree with pragmatist interpretations must in their own way wrestle with the issue Ryle raises concerning Heidegger's terminology.

Heidegger's philosophical intentions.[31] Although he understands Heidegger's goal of shaking free the question of the meaning of being from the misrepresentation of traditional, metaphysical language, Ryle's basic point is that using a new set of vocabulary needlessly complicates Heidegger's project. Ryle raises a relevant question: what do we make of Heidegger's terminology? All readings of Heidegger take issue with this question on some (implicit or explicit) level. Stating the fact so soon after the publication of *Being and Time* undoubtedly affected the path of Heidegger scholarship. *Whatever interpretation or argument one makes, one must, in some way, contend with the meaning of Heidegger's terms.* The issue continues to be part of the legacy of Heidegger scholarship.

Another persistent criticism of Heidegger is advanced in Rudolf Carnap's essay "The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language." Carnap criticizes Heidegger for using meaningless language and for raising a question concerning an impenetrable subject, therefore committing to an impossible project.[32] Metaphysics, argues Carnap, is either meaningless – which, according to Carnap, is

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[31] Ryle describes the issue the following way: "As a practical consequence of this view Heidegger imposes on himself the hard task of coming, and on us the alarming task of understanding, a complete new vocabulary of terms – mostly many-barreled compounds of everyday 'nursery' words and phrases – made to denote roots and stems of Meaning more primitive than those in which Plato, Aristotle, and subsequence scientists and philosophers have so taught us to talk and think, that we, by the strong force of habit, have come to regard as ultimate and pivotal ideas which are in fact composite and derivative. Heidegger's ontological Phenomenology is to turn our eyes back again to contemplate with a new method and a new clarity the springs of Meaning from which flow our most familiar and most 'homely' conceptions and classifications. The principle on which he seems to be designing his new terminology is, I should judge, the hypothesis that certain 'nursery' words and phrases have a primitiveness and freedom from sophistication which makes them more nearly adequate expressions of really primitive Meanings than the technical terms which science and philosophy in the course of a long development have established." (Ryle, "Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*," 57)

[32] Carnap, "Elimination of Metaphysics," 69-78.

exemplified by *What is Metaphysics?*[33] – or empirically verifiable and thereby

meaningful – which makes it the subject of the empirical sciences and therefore

something other than metaphysics. I describe Carnap's criticism as persistent not because

it is true,[34] but owing to the path of thought that develops from his criticism. Many

analytic philosophers seek to rescue Heidegger from Carnap's criticism, and attempt to

reveal the relevance of Heidegger's philosophy to the analytic tradition. Moreover, and

this is the point both Ryle and Carnap share, anyone who engages with Heidegger is

indebted to Carnap's criticism inasmuch as it established a baseline of which Heidegger

scholars must be mindful. *All interpretations of Heidegger must in some way grapple*

with the question concerning meaning in Heidegger, indeed, if there is meaning at all. In

this way too, the question of the meaning of 'meaning' is present in Carnap's essay.

Leaping forward sixty years, we now have the arrival of one of the most famous

pragmatist readings of Heidegger's *Being and Time* – Hubert Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-*

world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I. The book is known in

equal parts for its clarity and controversy. It might be said that the clarity with which

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[33] Martin Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?," in *Basic Writings: from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, ed. David Farrell Krell, 93-110 (London: Routledge, 2000).

[34] As Mark Wrathall explains in his essay "Philosophy, thinkers, and Heidegger's place in the history of being" (Mark Wrathall, "Philosophy, thinkers, and Heidegger's place in the history of being," in *Appropriating Heidegger*, ed. James E. Faulconer and Mark A. Wrathall, 9-29 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), I believe that Carnap's argument concerning the irrelevance of metaphysics is itself proof of just how relevant our encounter with the history of metaphysics really is. Philosophy has set itself the standards of science, and, so long as it continues to operate in this technological manner, cannot reflect on its own nature; in effect, philosophy cannot *do* philosophy, as Heidegger understands it. Wrathall contends: "Even philosophy itself no longer worries about the nature of what is, but simply works out a view of language and mind on the basis of the current understanding of being. Heidegger would agree that the method of analysis is the "end" or "completion" of philosophy. Philosophy is able to restrict itself to conceptual analysis, and to cede all questions of theory and ontology to the empirical sciences, precisely because the scientific – technological understanding of being is so completely dominant." (Wrathall, "Philosophy, thinkers, and Heidegger's place," 11)

Dreyfus elucidates Heidegger's *magnus opus* is part of its controversial aspect – Dreyfus

can be accused of reducing Heidegger's larger philosophical project to the pragmatism of

everyday relations.[35] Despite the controversy, Dreyfus' book provides an interesting

examination of Division I as it highlights the importance of the network of relations in

which Dasein is always already embedded, a network of everyday practices that

Heidegger argues is presupposed by Cartesian dualism. The network of relations is

generated by the human being's essentially purposeful character, which releases the

possibility of things in the world through its practical know-how. Dreyfus contends that

know-how (coloured by the thrownness of moods)[36] determines our engagement with the

world. Furthermore, the pragmatism of our understanding enables our skillful handling

by culling practical possibilities from impractical possibilities and presenting a sensible

world within which we can live in (almost complete) intelligibility.[37]

Dreyfus responds, at least implicitly, to both Ryle and Carnap. In the former case,

Dreyfus reconstrues some of Heidegger's most important and difficult terminologies. For

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[35] See for example: Leslie MacAvoy, "The Practical and the Discursive: The Place of Intelligibility in Heidegger," presented at the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, Dec. 2010.

[36] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 170-174.

[37] Dreyfus writes: "For Heidegger primordial understanding is know-how… To understand a hammer, for example, does not mean to know *that* hammers have such and such properties and *that* they are used for certain purposes – or that in order to hammer one follows a certain procedure, i.e., that grasps the hammer in one's hand, etc. Rather, understanding a hammer at its most primordial means *knowing how* to hammer… This know-how that makes possible skillful coping is more basic than the distinction between thought and action… But skillful coping cannot be exactly what Heidegger wants to call attention to with the existentiale called understanding, since coping covers all aspects of our activity in the current situation. What Heidegger wants to distinguish as understanding is one out of *three aspects* of what makes the current activity of dealing with things possible. He has so far introduced *affectedness*: what I am doing *matters*. Now he adds *understanding*. I *know how* to go about what I am doing, I am able to do what is appropriate in each situation. And just as affectedness reveals things as threatening, or interesting, and possibilities as indifferent, attractive, etc.; understanding reveals some actions as doable, as making sense, and others as not, or, better, it does not reveal these other possibilities as possibilities at all." (Ibid., 184-185)

example, Dreyfus uses the more recognizable (though more metaphysically burdened) term 'human being' in lieu of Heidegger's terminological centrepiece in *Being and Time* – Dasein. He does so because he argues that whatever Dasein means *exactly*, it ultimately has to do with the *human way of being*.[38] Similarly, Dreyfus replaces *das Man* (rendered in the Macquarrie and Robinson translation as *the They*) with 'the One' in order to preserve what he interprets as the generality and the normativity inherent in the original German term.[39] Furthermore, and the next term is directly related to our discussion, Dreyfus renames 'understanding' as practical 'know-how'.[40] The innately pragmatic term replaces the more neutral sounding (yet intentionally non-metaphysical and non-epistemological sounding) 'understanding'. The aforementioned are but a few examples of how Dreyfus responds to Ryle's challenge.

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[38] Dreyfus explains his translation here: "The best way to understand what Heidegger means by Dasein is to think of our term "human being," which can refer to a way of being that is characteristic of all people or to a specific person – a human being. Roughly, in Division I Heidegger is interested in the human *way of being*, which he calls "being-there" or Dasein. In Division II he is interested in individual human beings and speaks more often of *a* Dasein. I will switch back and forth between "human being" and "a human being," as Heidegger does between "Dasein" and "a Dasein," using whichever term brings out Heidegger's meaning at a particular point in his analysis. The challenge is to do justice to the fact that Dasein names beings like you and me, while at the same time preserving the strategy of *Being and Time*, which is to reverse the Cartesian tradition by making the individual; subject somehow dependent upon shared social practices." (Ibid., 14).

[39] As Dreyfus contends: "First, a piece of equipment is the equipment it is no matter who uses it. Hammers, typewriters, and buses are not just for me to use but for others too. Equipment is for "Anybody" – a general user. Second, there is a normal (appropriate) way to use any piece of equipment. This norm is expressed by saying what "one" does, as in "one eats one's peas with a fork." To refer to the *normal* user, Heidegger coins the term *das Man*, which our translators call "the They." This translation is misleading, however, since it suggests that *I* am distinguished from *them*, whereas Heidegger's whole point is that the equipment and roles of a society are defined by norms that apply to *anyone*. But even, translating *das Man* by "we" or by "anyone" does not capture the normative character of the expression. *We* or *Anyone* might try to cheat the Internal Revenue Service, but still, *one* pays *one's* taxes. To preserve a feel for the appeal to normativity in statements about what one does and does not do, we must stay close to Heidegger's German and translate *das Man* by "the one."" (Ibid., 152)

[40] Ibid., 184-214.

In the case of Carnap's criticism, Dreyfus does not delve into Division II wherein, as Carnap sees it, the empirically unverifiable language is most predominant. Dreyfus chooses to focus on Division I and sets out the task of clarifying the relevance of Heidegger's philosophy in practical terms. Dreyfus' know-how model of the understanding answers the question in no uncertain terms: the relevance, he argues, is found in Heidegger's phenomenological examination of being-in-the-world wherein the human being is always already coping with a world of practical possibilities. Therefore, Dreyfus concludes meaning arises in primordial human practice.[41] Notably, with his efforts, Dreyfus issued a fresh challenge for Heidegger scholars – *how do we understand the meaning of 'meaning'?*

Analytic readings of Heidegger since the 1990's necessarily engage with Dreyfus' treatment of Heidegger owing at the very least to the standard of clarity Dreyfus established. Since *Being-in-the-World*, scholars in general must take on the challenge of at least matching Dreyfus' transparent treatment of Heidegger's notoriously difficult text. In some ways then, as it is with Ryle and Carnap, all readings of Heidegger contend with the pragmatist's vision of Heidegger. Indeed, my reading of Heidegger is indebted to Dreyfus as well. To return now to the question of this chapter, *how should we understand the meaning of 'meaning'?*, and to the question of this section, *how should we read Heidegger?*, we discover a variance of responses: We must read Heidegger with some trepidation over his language. Actually, we shouldn't bother to read Heidegger. On

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[41] Ibid., 281.

second thought, *read* Heidegger, but read him as a pragmatist. *Should we, then, read Heidegger from a pragmatist perspective?*

If we leave aside the criticism that *Being and Time* cannot be read only from the perspective of Division I,[42] and directly engage with Dreyfus' work, it appears that despite its clarity, Dreyfus' reading leaves some questions unanswered, such as: Why is the understanding practically oriented? That is, what is the condition of possibility of a practically-oriented understanding? Also, is state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] just the background to the practical coping of the understanding, or should its pervasive passivity (*i.e.,* the thrownness we can never throw-off or get a handle on or render useful) be brought more into the foreground analysis? Furthermore, why does Dasein understand *at all*? The questions indicate a more primordial ground that has yet to be disclosed in Dreyfus' know-how model.

Perhaps a version of the know-how model, one that considers a larger portion of Heidegger's work, or one that works out the nuances of the understanding in greater detail is a more appropriate reading. *Indeed, maybe we should read Heidegger as a pragmatist, just not exactly as Dreyfus' version of Heidegger.* Critics such as William Blattner, Taylor Carman, and Mark Wrathall have all taken up the path of interpretation initiated by Dreyfus and argue *just that* – they *do* agree with Dreyfus that understanding is a practical activity, but develop diverging versions of Heidegger's use of

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[42] See for example: Travis T. Anderson, "Review of *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time,*" *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 1, Vol. 13 (1993): 62-69.

'interpretation' [*Auslegang*].[43] Dreyfus describes 'interpretation' as a reflective activity, which is made explicit when the unreflective skill generated by the pre-reflective understanding fails to cope with the environment.[44] Interpretation, by this view, is therefore a reflective activity brought in to help when the know-how of the understanding is inadequate for the situation.

Blattner, for one, adopts part of Dreyfus' know-how model[45] and pushes it further down the path of articulation [*Gliederung*] such that the primacy of understanding is shifted to the primacy of interpretation [*Auslegung*], and even more specifically, to assertion [*Aussagen*].[46] Blattner's assertion-model[47] clarifies a point Dreyfus initiates

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[43] A similar analysis of Dreyfus, Blattner, and Carman's ideas can be found in Mark Wrathall's essay "Heidegger on Human Understanding" (Mark Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," in *The Cambridge Companion to Being and Time*, ed. Mark A. Wrathall, 184-187 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[44] As Dreyfus describes: "Briefly: Understanding, i.e., unreflective, everyday, projective activity such as hammering, becomes explicit in the practical deliberation necessitated when a skill fails to suffice, and what thus becomes thematic can be expressed in speech acts such as "This hammer is too heavy." That which is laid out as the unavailable, in what Heidegger calls "interpretation" (*Auslegang*), can then be privately (selectively) thematized as occurrent by means of assertions stating propositions assigning predicates to subjects, such as "This hammer weighs one pound."" (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 195)

[45] Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 185.

[46] Blattner claims, "understanding that has propositional content (i.e., interpretation) is derivative of understanding that does not. Our ability to grasp the world in such a way that we can characterize it descriptively is derivative of our engaged abilities, our skills and capacities. We can formulate this idea more compactly thus: *representation is derivative of our engaged abilities…* Hence, we may restate Heidegger's thesis in par. 32 thus: there is a level of mastery and intelligence in human life that is not conceptually mediated, that cannot be captured in assertions" (Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 95).

[47] As was noted in an earlier footnote, some critics such as Blattner and Tugenhadt argue that Heidegger (tacitly) assumes that linguistic meaning determines reference. Another well know critic in this group is Cristina Lafont – see Cristina Lafont, *Heidegger, Language and World-disclosure*, trans. Graham Harman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). If in fact linguistic meaning determines reference for Heidegger, then the traditional subject/object dichotomy is re-introduced. To read a different perspective, see Leslie MacAvoy, "On the Unity of Intelligibility in Heidegger: Against Distinguishing the Practical and the Discursive," *Philosophy Today* 55, SPEP Supplement (2011): 169-176. In this article, MacAvoy argues that meaning does not determine reference and signification in an absolute fashion. Rather, meaning is the condition of possibility of reference and signification, but is not entirely responsible for its expression.

rudimentarily, that is, phenomenological work is *really done* by what is made explicit.[48]

For Dreyfus, know-how is how humans make their understanding (and their *way of being*

or *the meaning of their being*) explicit. Blattner, on the other hand, more forcefully

pronounces the distinction between understanding and interpretation. For him, the know-

how of the understanding *is* more primordial than the assertion of interpretation, but,

since it is pre-cognitive and in part inexpressible, understanding *does not* reveal the

human way of being. Only cognitive understanding, in effect, expressible, assertable,

propositional, or explicit understanding reveals the human way of being.[49] To be certain,

cognitive understanding (or assertion) is derived from pre-cognitive understanding, but

importantly, assertion has *phenomenological priority* in Blattner's assertion-model.

Therefore, understanding human comportment must be sought in the relation between

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Reference and signification surpass the condition from whence it came. In this way, the ground of being under-determines the possibility being. Therefore, as a way to look past the issue of linguistic idealism, MacAvoy argues that we must investigate discourse as the articulation of meaning.

[48] Near the end of the section on "Understanding and Interpretation", Blattner advances one of the principal arguments of his book, that the "line between understanding and interpretation is just this line, between what can and cannot be expressed in assertion" (Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 97). He continues: "One might worry here that I have collapsed what Heidegger calls the "existential-hermeneutic" and "apophantical" *as*'s (201/158). The apophantical *as* is the *as* of assertion, that is the grammatically definite as of predication, whereas the hermeneutic *as* is the *as* of interpretation, which is not grammatically definite. To use this cup as a paper weight in response to a breakdown situation (in which the wind is blowing my manuscript around) is not to assert that this cup is possibly, necessarily, or merely actually a paper weight. Assertion defines the logic of understanding further than does interpretation. Heidegger does not have a special name for the *as* of pre-interpretive understanding; he does not in fact seem to have seen clearly that he needs one. It should be there, however." (Ibid., 97)

[49] Robert Brandom makes a similar argument in "Dasein, the Being that Thematizes" (Robert Brandom, "Dasein, the Being that Thematizes," in *Tales of the Mighty Dead: Historical Essays in the Metaphysics of Intentionality*, 324-347 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), which can be summarized in the following way: Discourse is underpinned by idle talk. Idle talk presupposes language. Language is only possible because of assertion. Therefore, assertion is a necessary condition of Dasein, and assertion is an instrument of normativity. On the other hand, John Haugeland offers a critical look at Brandom's argument concerning Heidegger's discussion of language in *Being and Time* and the importance of language and assertion in the disclosure of authentic possibility. See: John Haugeland, "Reading Brandom Reading Heidegger," *European Journal of Philosophy* 13:3 (2005): 421–428.

what *can be said* and *what cannot be said*. In my view, the interesting part of this

formulation is in the essential character of *what cannot be said*. Blattner, however,

emphasizes our ability-to-be over the nullity from which this ability arises.[50] In general,

Blattner offers good insight into the importance of language in Heidegger's question of

the meaning of being. The problem is Blattner's discussion remains too cognitive and

does not do justice to Heidegger's discussion of language as pre-reflective discourse

[*Rede*] or as "the Articulation of intelligibility."[51] In response to Blattner, the necessary

question therefore arises: What is concealed by *what can be said*, and what is the

character of *the unsaid* that recedes from all expression such that expression can appear?

We will discover in the following chapters that this question (and all questions regarding

the 'not', the refusal of being, and the nothing) cannot be treated by a pragmatist

approach.

Taylor Carman, on the other hand, moves towards a middle ground between what

he considers as the extreme edges of Heidegger scholarship,[52] and finds his centre

through an examination of, as it is described by one commentator, the pervasiveness of

interpretation [*Auslegang*][53] in Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology. Like

Blattner and Dreyfus before him, Carman agrees that understanding is a type of practical

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[50] Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 154.

[51] BT 203/SZ 161

[52] By looking at how he describes his project, we can appreciate how Carman attempts to occupy a middle ground in Heideggerian scholarship: "On my account *Being and Time* is an interpretive description of the conditions of interpretation, that is, the conditions of our ability to understand explicitly *that* and *what* entities, including ourselves, *are*." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 2)

[53] Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 185.

knowledge, that is, a knowledge of *how* to be. Also similar to Blattner, Carman argues

that although understanding has ontological primacy, interpretation is more important to

the disclosure of being.[54] Diverging from the assertion-model, however, Carman widens

the scope of what counts as interpretation, and contends that what counts as *explicit* is

whatever is *demonstrable*. Therefore, interpretation is the practical implementation or

expression of the know-how of the understanding.[55] The benefit of Carman's

demonstration-model is that he reintroduces a more universal understanding of

interpretation to the pragmatist debate, one that takes into consideration the

fundamentally discursive character of Dasein, that is to say, the character of a self-

interpreting being who cares about things, and through its care, interprets and reveals

possibilities. As Heidegger conveys, "no sooner has Dasein expressed anything about

itself to itself, than it has already interpreted itself as *care* (*cura*), even though it has done

so only pre-ontologically" (BT 227/SZ 183). Similar to the assertion-model, however,

Carman's demonstration-model seems to miss a fundamental point, that is, interpretation

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[54] Carman writes: "Yet in spite of the ontological primacy and systematic prominence of understanding in *Being and Time*, I want to suggest that methodologically the concept plays a secondary role to Heidegger's notion of interpretation (*Auslegung*). Understanding is the more primordial phenomenon, yet it is interpretation that figures as the guiding thread in the analytic of Dasein taken as a whole. What Heidegger is trying to account for is not just our capacity to understand entities in their being, but more precisely our capacity to understand things explicitly, as such, *as being*. Interpretation is understanding made explicit…. Interpretation therefore presupposes understanding, not vice versa… Understanding is the more primordial phenomenon, yet it is interpretation – that is, the fact that we (at least sometimes) understand things explicitly or as such – that figures as a premise in the analytic of Dasein." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 20-21)

[55] In Carman's words: "If understanding in Heidegger's sense consists in *knowing how,* then interpretation – the explicitation of that understanding – must consist in manifesting, demonstrating, or *showing* the *how* that we know in understanding. If understanding is *knowing how,* interpretation must be a kind of *showing how*. By 'showing how' I do not mean specifically instructive or didactic behavior, but rather *demonstrative* practice, where 'demonstrative' means indicating, manifesting, showing." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 210)

is only one part of the existential structure of Dasein and arises from a deeper level of possibility, which is expressed not through explicitness, but through implicitness.

Mark Wrathall attempts to bring pragmatist readings of Heidegger into contact with the deeper structure of Dasein. While he appreciates Carman's attempt to discuss 'the pervasiveness claim',[56] Wrathall considers Carman's version of meaning, understood as the demonstrable explicitness of interpretation, to overstate the facts.[57] In point of fact, Wrathall takes issue with Dreyfus, Blattner and Carman's readings of Heidegger because, he argues, none of their readings investigate the structure of being.[58] Wrathall provides a 'structural-functional' account of understanding and interpretation, which situates understanding as the underlying structure of all of Dasein's activities – in other words, activities *are activities* due to understanding – and therefore pervasive at all levels. The main difference between Wrathall's structural-functional model and the other pragmatists he cites is that Wrathall believes he has identified the transcendent structure of the

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[56] Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 186.

[57] Ibid., 187.

[58] Wrathall explains: "I want to advance, in particular, two claims to counter what I view as the two principal errors of orthodox pragmatist accounts. First, while I accept Dreyfus' vertical account of types of understanding-comportment, I don't believe that this captures what Heidegger meant when he argued for the primordiality of understanding. Understanding is not the most basic kind of human activity. It is the structure that makes all human activities *activities* as opposed to mere movements or events. Second, I suggest that *making explicit* is not the primary function of interpretation. It is true that *Ausdrucklichkeit* or *expressness* is the structure of interpretation. And expressness names a structure that includes a explicitness in some of its modes. But we're after the general structure that Heidegger has in mind. Interpretation, for Heidegger, is action in which we "enact" the understanding – we commit ourselves to definite possibilities projected by the understanding. Interpretive enactment makes "express" certain meanings – it lifts them into salience, gives them definitiveness, and so on. It can do this without involving deliberateness (Dreyfus), conceptually mediated activity (Blattner), the use of language (Gadamer and Ricoeur), or demonstrative action (Carman), although it certainly does involves (*sic*) those things in particular instances." (Ibid., 188)

understanding[59] – the structure of understanding that underpins all other determinations of the understanding.[60] Another way of putting it is to say that Wrathall attempts to disclose the fundamental connection between understanding and the projection of possibilities. The projection of possibilities, he argues, is the pervasive element in all human activity. To describe it is therefore to make room for a more profound phenomenological investigation.[61] The structural-functional model deepens the pragmatist conversation by introducing a structure-based argument. Wrathall moves the primacy of understanding and interpretation to a more primordial level by removing the focus from human activity and expression and redirecting it towards the exploration of the structural possibility of activity and expression – a possibility, which according to Wrathall shows itself in the projective nature of being. We therefore gain insight a new question, namely, *what is the possibility of meaning?* Nevertheless, Wrathall, like those pragmatists before him, finds clues in what is *shown*, and focusses on what *appears* in phenomenological description rather than on what *disappears* from our attempts at

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[59] As Wrathall describes, "every human action, practice, skill, mental or perceptual state, emotion, mood or disposition will manifest understanding." (Ibid.,188)

[60] Wrathall explains his view the following way: "The function of understanding, then, is (a) to disclose "in advance" – that is, before we engage in any particular concrete activities – the relations that constitute entities as the entities that they are; and (b) to place us "within" contexts of relationships "with familiarity" – that is, to enable us to know our way around the world, to find it intelligible or understandable. The structure that allows understanding to perform this function, Heidegger claims, is "projecting onto possibilities"." (Ibid., 189)

[61] Wrathall describes the projection of interpretation: "Just to emphasize, then, there are three key moments to this formal, structural-functional definition of interpretation. The first is that interpretation "works out" the possibilities projected in the understanding. "Working out" (*Ausarbeitung*) is executing, accomplishing, bringing about what is afforded as a possibility by our understanding. The second moment of the interpretation is the *Ausbildung*, the development or cultivation or refinement of the understanding. As we encounter the concrete particularities of a situation opened up in a projection, we acquire a more precise, more closely tailored understanding of what possibilities the world affords us. In the third moment, the interpretive act lifts into salience some particular set of relationships within which entities and actions lie at any given moment." (Ibid., 194).

disclosure. As he presses into the question concerning possibility, Wrathall conceals

another equally fundamental question, the question concerning impossibility.

Restating now the main question of this section in new terms, *do we join the*

pragmatist critics and support the pragmatist reading of Heidegger? It seems that the

pragmatist readings share at least one common thread, that is, they all at some level

prioritize understanding in their accounts of Heidegger's project in *Being and Time*.

Athough Wrathall clearly states that understanding "is not the most basic kind of human

activity"[62] even his structural-functional model interprets the structure of being as

projective and primarily deployed through the understanding. Therefore, *pragmatist*

readings of Heidegger understand the meaning of being as an expression of the

understanding. Reading Heidegger pragmatically naturally has a specific set of insights,

implications and questions, some of which have been exposed. *Should we read as*

pragmatists do? Perhaps we are not yet ready to answer the question. Let us look at other

ways of reading Heidegger in order to further develop our exploration of how *we* must

read Heidegger and understand the meaning of 'meaning'. In the next section, I will

therefore turn to readings of Heidegger that respond to the pragmatist approach. The

readings I will discuss carefully investigate the primordiality of state-of-mind

[*Befindlichkeit*]; moreover, two critics in particular argue for the primacy of moods

[*Stimmung*]. Although not necessarily the position I will adopt, the readings open a yet

untold space for dialogue and perhaps get closer to the point.

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[62] Ibid.,188.

Section 3: A non-pragmatist version of meaning (the primacy of moods or prioritizing thrownness)

There are several possible responses to pragmatist readings of Heidegger. One response is to reconsider the primacy of moods over the understanding (*i.e.,* the important place that moods play in determining human activity) – an effort in contradistinction to the pragmatist readings of Heidegger. As we saw in the last section, the pragmatists I discussed tend to affirm the primacy of understanding and interpretation. In this section, I will introduce a discussion of moods that will reveal what is otherwise hidden in the pragmatist emphasis on practical understanding. As a way into the debate, I will begin by considering the pragmatists I previously discussed and examine their descriptions of state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] (sometimes translated as 'disposedness'[63] or 'affectedness'[64]) and especially mood [*Stimmung*]. Indeed, I will continue to reflect on how we should read Heidegger, and therefore, I will carry on considering a range of interpretations. Ultimately, all readings simultaneously conceal and reveal the text – the question is which reading do we find the most revealing? Keeping the goal in mind, I will then explore the argument that moods are *more fundamental* than interpretation and understanding.[65] Finally, I will argue that neither understanding nor state-of-mind has primacy, as Heidegger suggests in his notion of equiprimordiality, but rather, they are

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[63] Critics such as William Blattner, Taylor Carman, and Mark Wrathall prefer 'disposedness' as the translation for *Befindlichkeit*.

[64] Hubert Dreyfus, for example, translates *Befindlichkeit* as 'affectedness'.

[65] This section is most notably influenced by Matthew Ratcliffe's "Why Mood Matters" (Ratcliffe, "Why Mood Matters," 157-176) and Josh Michael Hayes' "Being-affected: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the pathology of truth" (Hayes, "Being-affected," 156-173).

equally basic features of human existence and, in fact, are constituted by a more essential

feature – *possibility as such*.[66]

Section 3.1: What do pragmatists say about moods?

Hubert Dreyfus describes moods as *colours* that paint the understanding, and, like

colours that are always part of our world, we can neither get entirely "clear about them"

nor can we "get clear *of* them" , and thus, moods are "always already given" and not

within our control.[67] In his colour-model of moods, Dreyfus discusses two interesting,

interrelated points: the publicness of moods and the originary transcendence of moods.

First, Dreyfus does a good job of highlighting the publicness of moods as an expression

of being in the world with others, a move that calls attention to Heidegger's rejection of

the traditionally psychological and subjective description of moods.[68] In other words, a

mood is not my private experience, but most of the time constituted by my shared

experience with others.[69] Second, Dreyfus' discussion of public moods intimates the

underlying transcendence of moods. Moods always refer to something beyond

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[66] This section is influenced by Thomas Sheehan's essay "Facticity and *Ereignis*" (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 42-68).

[67] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 173.

[68] Ibid., 170.

[69] Dreyfus establishes four points on moods "understood as specifications of a dimension of existence, i.e., of affectedness as a way of being-in-the-world. 1. Cultures have longstanding sensibilities. In one culture things show up as occasions for celebrating the sacred, while in another everything shows up as a threat to survival. 2. Moods depend on the norms of the one [*das Man*] (my addition of the German term). I can have only the sort of moods one can have in my culture; thus the public is the condition of possibility of personal moods. 3. There are social moods. .4. My mood, while possibly at a given time mine alone, is not essentially private; another person in my culture could share the same mood." (Ibid., 172)

themselves – they are more than *mere feelings*, they are not in my control, and they are not necessarily or very often mine. Moods therefore disclose transcendence.[70]

However, Dreyfus does not amply develop the idea of mood as originary transcendence – indeed, the publicness of moods is only one of a few ways that moods are transcendent. Moreover, what he does say presupposes a confusing mix of *an independently given object* (to be coloured) *and an autonomous subject* (who is coloured by moods, but is also the colouring force) *who intends an object* (which is understood practically).[71] There are, nevertheless, a few good insights we can draw from the colour-model. Colourlessness, like moodlessness, is impossible. We are thrown into a world of colour as we are thrown into moods. In addition, colours affect how we see the world, yet we do not have control over what colours we see. Likewise, moods set up a world that matters, but we do not have control over what matters or how things matter. Despite its positive contribution, the main problem with the colour-model is that it proposes that

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[70] Dreyfus concludes the brief section on "Mood as Originary Transcendence" in the following way: "Things are always encountered in some specific way, as attractive, threatening, interesting, boring, frustrating, etc. Possible actions are always enticing, frightening, intriguing, etc. We care when a piece of equipment breaks down and whether or not we achieve our goals. Affectedness is the condition of possibility of specific things showing up as mattering. Affectedness is therefore a dimension of Dasein's disclosing – an aspect of originary transcendence." (Ibid., 175)

[71] Dreyfus writes: "Moods provide the background on the basis of which specific events can affect us. If I am in a frightened mood, every particular thing shows up as fearsome. Mood colors the whole world and everything that comes into it, so that even what I remember, anticipate and imagine is bright or drab, reassuring or, in the above example, frightening, depending on my current mood. In this way moods are like the weather. On a sunny day not only are all present objects bright, but it is difficult to imagine a drab world, and, conversely on dull days everything that can show up is dull, and so is everything one can envisage. Indeed, far from being fleeting as the tradition has supposed, moods settle in like the weather and tend to perpetuate themselves. For example, when I am annoyed, new events, even those which when I am joyful show up as challenging or amusing, show up as grounds for further annoyance… As the annoyance case makes clear, moods do not just let things show up as mattering; they also show you how things are going with you. One comes back from the yonder of annoying things and events to a realization that one is annoyed. This sort of reflection from the world, rather than introspection, is the way we find ourselves… *Heidegger wants as usual to stress that moods provide the background for intentionality, i.e., for the specific ways things and possibilities show up as mattering*." [italics my emphasis] (Ibid., 174)

colour is not essential to the object while mood is essential to the world. Another way to put it is to say that Dreyfus' colour-model is overly naturalistic. As the colour-model implies, it might not be clear how we define colours, but we can claim they are *not the condition of possibility of objects*. The difference is clear: the colour-model implies that the understanding is more primordial than moods, while if Heidegger is correct, the understanding *only understands* or *only appears* due to moods. Therefore, the colour-model does not capture the primordiality of moods or their entanglement with the world they establish.

Tweaking slightly Dreyfus' colour-model, William Blattner argues that moods do not colour-in objects of cognition,[72] but rather set the tone of life and tune us in to our environment.[73] Moods are *atmospheres* wherein we find ourselves absorbed.[74] Blattner's atmosphere-model is less metaphysically dualistic than the colour-model inasmuch as it more aptly captures the embeddedness of our moods with how things matter. An atmosphere, like a mood, is the ground upon which an environment establishes itself. Depending on the atmosphere, the world within it will appear differently. Similarly, moods disclose a world that matters and in part determine how the world matters. However, the atmosphere-model is nevertheless incomplete (although, perhaps self-

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[72] Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 81.

[73] Ibid., 78.

[74] Blattner describes moods in the following way: "First, moods are *import-disclosive*: they disclose the way things matter, that is, the imports entities bear. Second, moods are *atmospheric*: they function phenomenologically like atmospheres in which we are steeped, rather than interior private states. Third, moods are *self-monitoring*: they reveal to us "how we are doing and how we are faring," as Heidegger puts it (173/134). Fourth, moods are *passive*: we are delivered over to moods." (Ibid., 81)

consciously so)[75] and seemingly too cognitive (*i.e.,* 'atmosphere' implies a subject or

mind that mentally perceives a place or ambience in which it finds itself). Moods

certainly do everything Blattner says they do, but they *do more* as well. Moods do not

only disclose the way things matter; *moods are the reason things matter to us at all*. As

Heidegger writes, "*Existentially, a state-of-mind implies a disclosive submission to the*

world, **out of which** *we can encounter something that matters to us*"[76] (my bold). Moods

are self-monitoring as Blattner writes,[77] but they *are also* contingent on other

distinctively human characteristics such as understanding [*Verständnis*] and discourse

[*Rede*]. Heidegger expresses the point clearly when he explains that, "In discourse the

intelligibility of Being-in-the-world (an intelligibility which goes with a state-of-mind) is

articulated according to significations; and discourse is this articulation."[78] Therefore,

moods are *more than self-monitoring* – an overly individualistic term that implies

cognitive mediation. More precisely, *moods are being-in-the-world-monitoring* or *care-*

monitoring or *care-showing*. When Heidegger writes that a "mood makes manifest 'how

one is, and how one is faring ["wie einem ist und wird"],"[79] he means: *how one is and*

faring in the world or *as a being-in-the-world*, or finally, *how one is and faring inasmuch*

as one cares.

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[75] Blattner believes that Heidegger does not convincingly show moods to be anything more than private states: "Heidegger does seem to have something very much lie what many psychologists today call "moods" in mind in his analysis: moods disclose entire situations and do so pervasively, and they disclose to us how we are doing and faring." (Ibid., 81)

[76] BT 177/ SZ 138

[77] Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 81.

[78] BT 206/SZ 163

[79] BT 173, SZ 135

The incompletion of the atmosphere-model is furthermore noticeable in one of Blattner's examples. Blattner describes the mood of fear arising from an encounter between a stranger and a fearsome looking dog.[80] Thankfully, the owner of the dog is present and reassures the fearful person that the dog is gentle and loving – her name is Sweet Pea – which calms the stranger down. The tranquil mood gives way to an affectionate exchange between the stranger and the dog. Blattner's point is that the appearance of the dog is contingent upon the mood. When the stranger's mood is fearful, the dog looks frightening. When the stranger's mood is calm, the dog appears kind.[81] The further point I will underscore is that the mood shifted when the dog owner *declared* the dog to be friendly, which thereby changed the stranger's understanding of the situation.[82] Moods *do* disclose the way things matter, they *do* reveal to us how we are doing, *and they also* disclose how we understand our environment. At the same time, how we understand our environment is contingent on moods. Indeed, the equiprimordial relationship between state-of-mind and understanding is described in the following way by Heidegger:

> As *existentialia*, state-of-mind and understanding characterize the primoridal disclosedness of Being-in-the-world. By way of having a mood, Dasein 'sees' possibilities, in terms of which it is.

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[80] Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 82.

[81] Blattner describes what he believes is the crucial point: "The point is that the would-be affectively neutral cognitive content of the experience, that is, *what you see*, is in part a function of your fear or comfort. The dog *looks different*, now that you no longer fear him. The content of experience is shot through with import "all the way down."" (Ibid., 82)

[82] We will soon see that Matthew Ratcliffe thematizes this point in his article "Why Mood Matters" (Ratcliffe, "Why Mood Matters," 157-176).

In the projective disclosure of such possibilities, it already has a mood in every case. The projection of its ownmost potenitality-for-Being has been delivered over to the Fact of its thrownness into the "there".[83]

Blattner's atmosphere-model pushes past the dichotomy inherent in Dreyfus' colour-model of moods, but the atmosphere-model remains overly private and psychological, and does not press deeper to the fundamental point, that is, moods are a basic characteristic of Dasein alongside understanding and discourse, and disclose a primordial transcendence. Heidegger expresses the idea in the following passage:

With equal primordiality the understanding projects Dasein's Being both upon its "for-the-sake-of-which" and upon significance, as the worldhood of its current world. The character of understanding as projection is constitutive for Being-in-the-world with regard to the disclosedness of its existentially constitutive state-of-Being by which the factical potentiality-for-Being gets its leeway [Spielraum]. And as thrown, Dasein is thrown into the kind of Being which we call "projecting". Projecting has nothing to do with comporting oneself towards a plan that has been thought out, and in accordance with which Dasein arranges its Being. On the contrary, any Dasein has, as Dasein, already projected itself; and as long as it is, it is projecting. As long as it is, Dasein always has understood itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities. Furthermore, the character of understanding as projection is such that the understanding does not grasp thematically that upon

[83] BT 188/SZ 148

which it projects – that is to say, possibilities. Grasping it in such

a matter would take away from what is projected its very

character as a possibility, and would reduce it to the given

contents which we have in mind; whereas projection, in throwing,

throws before itself the possibility as possibility, and lets it *be* as

such. As projecting, understanding is the kind of Being of Dasein

in which it *is* its possibilities as possibilities.[84]

Following from his analysis of understanding [*Verständnis*], Taylor Carman

attempts to bridge the gap between analytic and continental readings of Heidegger and

portrays moods as unmediated by cognition or practice.[85] He contends that moods are the

condition of possibility for things to matter to us, and for things *not* to matter to us[86] – a

claim that really sets Carman apart from Dreyfus and Blattner. Indeed, moods reveal

more than how things practically matter. They can also reveal the foundation of

unintelligibility, which is concealed by the network of significance in which we find

ourselves most of the time. The ground of unintelligibility is what Heidegger calls

occurrent reality or occurrentness [*Vorhandenheit*], and which Carman describes as

ultimately resistant to our human attempts of creating practical meaning.[87] Another way

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[84] BT 185/ SZ 145

[85] Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 192.

[86] Carman writes: "Disposedness or mood is the disclosure of Dasein's thrownness (*Gerworfenheit*), which establishes our primordial temporal sense of pastness or "having been" (*Gewesenheit*). Thrownness is the companion concept to projection, which is to say our understanding of the possibilities that carve out the temporal horizon of the future. Along with the abiding present or "now" in which we encounter intrawordly entities, those two ecstasies constitute Dasein's temporal structure as "thrown projection." More specifically, moods make it possible for things to "matter" (*angehen*) (SZ 137) to us, or not, over and beyond their specific pragmatic intelligibility within the referential context of significance." (Ibid., 192)

[87] Carman describes the point: "Anxiety thus reveals what Dasein always already understands about occurrent reality, namely, that it is radically, stubbornly, awesomely independent of us and our abilities, our hopes, our fears, indeed the very conditions of our interpretations of things at large. Nature as such, that is,

of describing unintelligibility, continues Carman, is as 'the nothing' [*das Nichts*], which

is disclosed in 'fundamental moods' [*Grundstimmung*]. 'The nothing' is the radical

indifference of occurrentness, or presence-at-hand, to our worldly projects. – an

indifference which, we will see in the following chapters, Carman interprets from a

realist perspective, and which I will argue must be understood as given in the problem of

transcendence.[88] Notably, Carman's realism is (already) apparent in how he reads

Heidegger's argument on occurrentness and readyness-to-hand [*Zuhandenheit*]. In his

view, the world of isolated, independent objects is ultimately resistant to the human

meaning process. Since moods disclose the resistance, moods reveal meaningfulness and

meaninglessness.[89]

Carman's realist treatment of moods is helpful as it shows us the two sides of

disclosure – what is revealed and concealed, or what is active and passive. In a manner of

speaking, Carman gives us access to the passivity of thrownness, and to what is

withdrawn from the activity of projection. Indeed, Carman contends that 'the nothing'

reveals the primacy of the network of shared practices from which interpretation

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stands beyond the bounds of the mundane hermeneutic conditions it is the task of the analytic of Dasein to elucidate" (Ibid., 195).

[88] Carman argues for his position: "We should therefore abandon the widespread view that Heidegger simply subordinates occurrentness to availability *tout court* in favor of the more subtle argument that he conceives of *interpretation* as having its constitutive conditions in the referential structure of practical significance, which of course includes equipment and its availability" (Ibid., 196).

[89] Carman describes the point in the following way: "So, although it is true that interpretation is possible only on the basis of practical competence guided by social norms, it is not the case that occurrent entities are accessible and intelligible to us only as constructions or modifications of things already domesticated within the existential conditions of interpretation. Although our encounters with nature always as a matter of fact occur against a background of cultural practices, nature as such is minimally accessible to us precisely as extending beyond the hermeneutic conditions peculiar to us and our familiar worlds." (Ibid., 198)

[*Auslegung*] presses into possibilities. He does not, however, delve into the withdrawal of 'the nothing' from the network of shared practices, or what the withdrawal does in the meaning process. From another perspective, it is arguable that the space beyond interpretation should not be thought of *as something beyond understanding* (as Carman's realist account implies), but *as the space from which* interpretation is possible and out of which meaning appears. Since his discussion of passivity is not the focus of his discussion, but rather derivative of his realist account of Heidegger's discussion of presence-at-hand and readyness-to-hand, Carman's reading of moods consequently offers an unelaborated account of passivity.

Similar to Carman, Mark Wrathall's discussion of moods is decidedly against the notion that one basic feature of existence has primacy over another. He insists that disposedness [*Befindlichkeit*], understanding [*Verständnis*] and discourse [*Rede*] are equiprimordial components of being-in, and therefore one is not more fundamental than the other.[90] Wrathall furthermore draws attention to the significance of the passivity inherent in human activity.[91] He emphasizes that the way things matter is in fact not

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[90] As Wrathall writes: "Dasein is *in* a world, then, insofar as it is familiar with definite ways of existing, and is engaged in taking a stand on its being. Heidegger's account of being-in in chapter 5 [of *Being and Time*] delineates three equiprimordial structures that are constitutive of familiarity with a world. We could characterize these structures in ordinary terms as follows: Dasein finds itself in a situation in which certain things stand out as mattering; Dasein possesses abilities for dealing with its situation and pursuing meaningful projects; and Dasein articulates both its situation and its abilities in a way that makes particular entities and references stand out as salient. These three sturctures are what Heidegger calls "disposedness" (*Befindlichkeit*), "understanding" (*Verständnis*), and "discourse" (*Rede*) respectively. Since these structures are equiprimordial constitutents of being-in, no one of them can be taken as more fundamental than the others and each one must be understood in terms of the others." (Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 4)

[91] Wrathall describes passivity in the following way: "There is a significant *passive* aspect to being-in. Dasein finds itself already situated in a particular world that is arranged in a definite, concrete fashion and

within our control, and therefore, *the fact that things matter in the precise way they do reveals an a priori passivity.*[92]

Wrathall's reading, based on equiprimordiality, is helpful in that it underscores the co-constitutive relations between the basic existential conditions of being-in-the-world. Based on the overwhelming textual evidence, there is good reason to follow his equiprimordial reading.[93] However, Wrathall nevertheless seems to prioritizes the understanding [*Verständnis*] in relation to the projection of possibilities thereby concealing the underlying passivity of possibility.[94] I will take a moment to consider the point in more detail in order to enter into a conversation about the ground of possibility. If we look at Wrathall's example of the rules of a game,[95] we can see that he understands

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where particular things have already shown up as mattering. Heidegger refers to this as Dasein's "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*): we are "thrown" into the world." (Ibid., 14)

[92] Wrathall writes: "Being-in-the-world, to summarize, involves our always finding ourselves in the world in a particular way. We have a 'there', that is, a meaningfully structured situation in which to act and exist. One constitutive element of there-being is that the world is always disposed or arranged in a particular way that we cannot fully control. Another element is that we ourselves are always disposed to things in a particular way; they always matter to us somehow or other. The way things matter is manifest in our moods, which govern and structure our comportment by disposing us in different ways to things in the world. So disposedness is an 'attunement', a way of being tuned in to things in the world, and tuned by the things of the world. This disposedness is something we can never fully master. But far from that being a detriment to our freedom, it is the condition that first makes it possible. It makes things matter to us, and makes us ready to deal with the things we encounter. Without that, we'd have no basis for action at all." (Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 37).

[93] See BT, Div. 1, Ch. 5.

[94] Wrathall draws an implicit line between the throwness of state-of-mind and the projection of the understanding and maintains that possibility occurs in the latter condition: "In understanding, one *projects* oneself onto various possibilities. Through its disposedness, Dasein finds itself in a factical situation and in a certain mood. Through its understanding, Dasein can go beyond its current situation, freely interpret itself, and, ultimately, take responsibility for its own existence." (Max Murphey and Mark A. Wrathall, "An Overview of *Being and Time*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*, ed. Mark A. Wrathall, 15 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[95] Murphey and Wrathall, "Overview of *Being and Time*," 15; Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 191.

the rules of the game (*i.e.,* the possibilities) as shaping the game's significance and

determining its meaningful possibilities (*i.e.,* actual and possibly-actual).[96] He asserts that

the rules of the game *constitute* the possibility of the game, and the range of possible

moves in the game is contingent on the rules. Notably, the range of possible moves that

are contingent on the rules is analogous to the range of possible interpretations that are

contingent on the understanding.[97] In this way Wrathall appropriately captures the two-

tiered structure constituted by the rules of the game and the range of plays of the game, or

from another perspective, the possibilities of the game projected by the rules (*i.e.,* the

understanding) and the skillful moves and strategic manoeuvers of game playing (*i.e.,*

interpretation).[98]

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[96] Wrathall describes his game analogy: "One might think of possibilities as events or states of affairs that could be actual but are not. We'll call such things "possible-actuals" to distinguish them from what Heidegger mean by "possibility." Possibilities as Heidegger understands them are orders or meaning, whole coherent ways of organizing what is actual and possibly-actual. To use a game analogy, the rules of the game are the possibilities. They describe the different meaningful configurations into which different moves in the game and different game pieces can enter. The rules are never actual in the way that a thrown pitch in baseball is either actual or a possible-actual. The rules are, rather, in the mode of shaping the significance of all the actual things that occur. In *understanding*, we project onto possibilities, meaning we grasp the actual in terms of possible – that is, in terms of space of significations that governs how the actual relates to other things, how it develops, what opportunities it affords, and so on. As one pursues those possibilities, one interprets oneself and the possibilities, developing them and working them out." (Murphey and Wrathall, "Overview of *Being and Time*," 15).

[97] Wrathall describes the understanding: "In *understanding*, we project onto possibilities, meaning we grasp the actual in terms of the possible – that is, in terms of a space of significations that governs how the actual relates to other things, how it develops, what opportunities it affords, and so on. As one pursues those possibilities, one interprets oneself and the possibilities, developing them and working them out. Heidegger calls such a commitment to a particular understanding "interpretation" [*Auslegung*]." (Ibid., 15)

[98] To this analogy, Wrathall adds that the possibilities of an object in the world are understood in terms of the range of possibilities circumscribed by the context within which the object is found. The possibilities of the context of the object are likewise freed by the range of possibilities of the object found therein. Furthermore, the possibilities of the context and object are worked out in time. Citing baseball as an example, Wrathall writes: "For example, we understand a baseball bat by projecting it onto the rules of baseball, which govern the possibilities that determine what can and cannot be done with the bat during the game. But we only understand the rules of baseball by projecting them in turn onto (among other things) bats and balls and bases and pitches and swings. And ultimately, Heidegger argues, the possibilities must

Nevertheless, I will add a third relation to this two-tiered structured, namely, the importance of *playing the game and of the players playing*. The possibilities of the game are not only projected by understanding the rules. *They are also, and crucially, opened up by the playing of the game (and furthermore beyond that, by playfulness and gameness).* Another way to think about the relation is in terms of what the rules *do not do* – rules, for example, tell us what we *can* and *cannot* do in the game, but they do *not* tell us *how* to play a game. Likewise, the understanding opens up a field of possible interpretations (*i.e.,* understanding determines *that* we can interpret the world), but something else decides *how* we understand things in the first place. In other words, *the playing* of the game is the (primordial) condition that disposes the game to its possibilities (made intelligible by the rules). Heidegger intimates the idea here:

> The relational totality of this signifying we call "*significance*". This is what makes up the structure of the world – the structure of that wherein Dasein as such already is. *Dasein, in its familiarity with significance, is the ontical condition for the possibility of discovering entities which are encountered in a world with involvement (readiness-to-hand) as their kind of Being, and which can thus make themselves known as they are in themselves [in seinem An-sich]*."[99]

One question we might ask, then, is: what constitutes the possibility of *the playing* of the game? The player is an essential part of the possibility of *the playing* the game.

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be projected onto time. The game of baseball affords a certain patterning of the temporal structure of life." (Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 191)

[99] BT 120/SZ 87

What constitutes a player? The player is only a player insofar as she plays the game. In an attempt to describe this circle in more detail, we can contend that a player must *be able to play* the game (*i.e.,* she must understand the rules enough to play the game), and she *must play* the game (*i.e.,* she is disposed to playfulness and gameness; she is willing and in the mood to play). Indeed, the player is not distinct from the game – upon playing the game the player becomes a constituting feature of the game. In point of fact, *the player and the game are equiprimordial, and the underpinning, characterizing feature of the relationship between the two is the play.*

The point I want to emphasize is that regardless of the complexity of the rules, regardless of the level of understanding and skillful interpretation, regardless of how playful or gamey one's mood, the playing of the game involves the *submission* of the player (and likewise the game) to *the play* of the game. To put it simply, what really gets the game going is not a decisive or skillful act, but a surrendering to the play of the game. Therefore, it is not only the understanding, as Wrathall contends, that works out possibilities. It is also the case that moods disclose an originary possibility, which arises from the passivity of thrownness. As Heidegger writes:

> Understanding is the Being of such potentiality-for-Being, which is never something still outstanding as not yet present-at-hand, but which, as something which is essentially present-at-hand, '*is*' with the Being of Dasein, in the sense of existence. Dasein is such that in every case it has understood (or alternatively, not understood) that it is to be thus or thus. As such understanding it 'knows' *what* it is capable of – that is, what its potentiality-for-

Being is capable of. This 'knowing' does not first arise from an immanent self-perception, but belongs to the Being of the "there", which is essentially understanding. And only *because* Dasein, in understanding, is its "there", *can* it go astray and fail to recognize itself. And is so far as understanding is *accompanied by* state-of-mind and as such is existentially surrendered to thrownness, Dasein has in every case already gone astray and failed to recognize itself. In its potentiality-for-Being it is therefore delivered over to the possibility of first finding itself again in its possibilities.[100]

Taking a general look at the pragmatist perspectives we have reviewed, we might conclude that although interpretation and mood are equiprimordial, it is interpretation that does all the phenomenological work that *really matters*. While the view has offered interesting insight into moods and state-of-mind, the crucial point I will call attention to is that *the position is limited to the very pragmatism by which it defines itself*. Pragmatism circumscribes the investigation of moods to use and purpose, and thus, the phenomenon of moods as such is concealed by the perspective that human practice is the bedrock beyond which meaning ceases to exist.

Another way to look at moods is in terms of their inherent passivity and the possibility concealed by thrownness. While pragmatists seem to construe the passivity of moods in terms of the activity of interpretation, another way to address passivity is to thematize the phenomenon itself. To put it in the form of a question: *What is revealed by an investigation into the passivity of moods? Or, what has thus far been concealed by our*

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[100] BT 183-184/SZ 144

reading of moods? To bring different perspectives that address these questions into view, we must now look at non-pragmatist readings of Heidegger, and examine how they treat the thrownness of moods.

Section 3.2: What do non-pragmatists say about moods?

One critic, for example, contends that moods are "pre-subjective and pre-objective", which means they underpin the possibility of experience.[101] Indeed, Matthew Ratcliffe argues that we only have objects because we have a world, and we only have a world because we have moods.[102] In short, moods give us a world. Ratcliffe raises the interesting point that things can only appear practically significant, whether it be threatening or useful or humiliating or enticing, because *moods free things in the world so that they can matter*.[103] Another interesting point Ratcliffe raises is the distinction between emotional states and moods. Here we find an often overlooked subtlety;[104] that is, it is not particular moods like being in a bad mood or feeling excited or bored or

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[101] Ratcliffe, "Why Moods Matter," 157.

[102] Ibid., 159.

[103] As Ratcliffe describes: "A mood does not determine how a particular thing is taken to be significant, such as "this pen is for writing," or even how lots of things appear significant, such as "all the people in this room are threatening." In order to encounter things in such ways, one must already be receptive to certain kinds of mattering, which in these cases are "practical utility" and "threat." Without an appreciation that things *can* matter in these ways, one could not encounter anything as threatening or useful. This is where mood comes in. Moods constitute the range of ways in which things are able to matter to us, and are thus essential to a sense of the kinds of significant possibility that the world can offer up for us." (Ibid., 159)

[104] I have in mind the pragmatist critics I previously discussed. However, as Ratcliffe points out, the oversight is somewhat understandable given the opacity of the term state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] and mood [*Stimmung*]. As Ratcliffe explains, "some moods do seem to be generalized emotions while others fit more easily with Heidegger's description of moods; therefore, the distinction between moods and emotional states is helpful in the latter case, but wrought with imprecision in the former. The terms blur even further when we consider the moods of those who suffer from psychiatric illnesses." (Ibid., 160)

irritable to which Heidegger refers when he talks about moods.[105] Rather, *moods give us a world in which being in a bad mood or feeling excited or bored or irritable is a possibility in the first place*.[106] That is to say, some moods, which are actually (as Ratcliffe calls them) emotional states or shallow moods, presuppose deeper moods. He illustrates the point by referring to the possibility of threat, which is presupposed by fear.[107] The depth of moods needs to be made explicit if we are to truly understand the primacy of moods.

To further distinguish between moods and emotional states, Ratcliffe refers to Heidegger's discussion of boredom [*Langeweile*] in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.[108] In this work, Heidegger describes three different situations exemplifying three levels of boredom. In the first instance, Heidegger describes the boredom we might experience in a train station.[109] Everything appears boring because of the background boredom of the setting and we do anything to distract ourselves from the boring place, people and things. In this case, there is an awareness of the boredom insofar as it is

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[105] Ibid., 159.

[106] As Ratcliffe explains: "Unlike an act of perceiving, believing, desiring, emoting, or remembering, a mood is not an *intentional state* directed at something within the world. Instead, it is a condition of possibility for such states. A "mood" such as "being in a bad mood with someone" is not a mood in Heidegger's sense; it is an emotional state that presupposes a mood. The mood is what allows things to matter in such a way that being annoyed with somebody is possible… If things were completely bereft of all mattering, we could not *relate* to them in any way and, therefore, would not have a sense of being *there*, amongst them." (Ibid., 159)

[107] Ratcliffe illustrates his point with an example: "For example, a mood incorporating the possibility of threat is presupposed by fear. Conversely, a mood in which all sense of threat was absent would render fear impossible. More generally, a deeper kind of mood or emotion is presupposed by the intelligibility of a shallow kind or, alternatively, renders the shallower kind unintelligible." (Ibid., 164).

[108] Ibid., 164-166.

[109] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 78.

possible to imagine the possibility of no longer being bored – an awareness betrayed by

our desperate actions to distract ourselves from all the boring features of the situation.

Another level of boredom appears when we are so bored that the boredom does not show

itself immediately.[110] Heidegger describes an evening in which we are so bored that we

fail to notice we are bored until the realization strikes us after the fact. This is a deeper

form of boredom inasmuch as it conceals other possible moods, which means it hides all

other possible ways of interacting with the environment. Importantly, however, the

boredom is context-dependent. During the evening, time passes slowly. We know the

evening will end eventually, but the time we have to spend at the event is nonetheless too

long; time truly feels endless due to our boredom. Once we leave the event, however, our

boredom dissipates and the time no longer feels like such a burden. The final level of

boredom Heidegger describes is the deepest of all and is all-encompassing in the sense

that it is not dependent on the situation.[111] It is omnipresent and exhaustive to such an

extent that it is impossible to imagine any possibilities for oneself or others. In the third

type of boredom, possibilities do not appear. That is to say, the deepest level of boredom

is not the result of people, places and things, nor is it due to a specific context or moment

in time. The third type of boredom is a way of relating to temporality – it is a

temporalization. Not surprisingly, shifting the worldview in the last type of boredom is

most difficult of all since there is no awareness of mood and therefore nothing from

which a shift can occur. Heidegger summarizes the three levels of boredom in the

following way:

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[110] Ibid., 106.

[111] Ibid., 132.

Because, however, the origin of boredom and the original relationship between the various forms of boredom remain and must remain completely concealed from our everyday understanding of this attunement, our everyday consciousness is also governed by uncertainty as to what properly bores us, as to what *that which is originarily boring is*. At first it seems that what bores us are boring things and people and suchlike. It would be wrong and at the same time unfruitful to want to eliminate this strange illusion. In the second form of boredom, that which bores us manifests itself as time in its standing. It is now no longer the things surrounding us, nor one's own person that bores us. What bores us is time. It is what specifically leaves us empty and holds us in limbo. Certainly it is the time that we have left ourselves, the time which still remains fixed in the form in which we think we know it in the everyday, the time with which we reckon. Yet now in the third form of boredom what leaves us empty in the manner of entrancing us is the time of Dasein as such, and what holds us in limbo and impels us is this time in its possibility as moment of vision, the temporality of Dasein itself with reference to that which is essentially proper to it, and indeed in the sense of the making possible of Dasein in general: *horizon and moment of vision*. *What bores* us in profound boredom, and thus – in accordance with what we have said earlier – what is solely and properly boring, is *temporality in a particular way of its temporalizing*.[112]

Part of Ratcliffe's point in looking at Heidegger's three levels of moods is to show that the pragmatist tendency to overlook moods as a fundamental feature of life

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[112] Ibid., 157-158.

might be explained by the fact that there are different levels of moods and these levels have not been thematized. Ratcliffe clarifies that the shallower moods (*i.e.,* what he calls emotional states) are context dependent, and therefore they shift fluidly alongside the modification of contexts. Thus, he argues that the first two levels of moods are shallow moods or emotional states. If shallow moods are taken to represent moods as such, it is no surprise that emotional states are often overshadowed by the practical weight of the understanding. Ratcliffe continues his argument, the shallower moods *do* seem to be driven by the understanding, by the way a person sees a situation and relates to a set of context-dependent possibilities. However, the deeper sort of mood, *moods as such*, typified by the last example of boredom is not context dependent. Rather, the deepest level of mood is the possibility of contexts as such. Basing his position on the deepest level of moods, Ratcliffe clearly sets himself apart from pragmatist commentators when he argues that moods are more primordial than understanding [Verständnis] and discourse [Rede].[113] As he argues, there is no understanding without mood, and moreover, mood determines how we understand the world. Therefore, according to Ratcliffe, all practical significance presupposes that there is the possibility of practical significance, a possibility constituted by mood*s*.[114]

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[113] Ibid., 162.

[114] Ratcliffe writes: "what understanding takes for granted is that these kinds of significance kinds of significance that particular entities have for us in particular situations, and one could not inhabit a significant world without understanding. However, what understanding takes for granted is that these kinds of significance are themselves possible. And their possibility depends upon mood, insofar as it determines the range of ways in which things are able to matter to us. Regardless of whether what one finds practically significant is a football, a novel, a radio, or a fast car, the mood-constituted possibility of finding anything practically significant is presupposed. To take the extreme case, a world that did not matter in any way and thus offered no significant possibilities would be a world where pursuit of all projects was unintelligible. Hence, although understanding determines whether or not a given entity *does* appear significant in some

How, then, do we become aware of our moods and the depth of our moods?

Ratcliffe maintains, by reflecting on our shifting moods. The greater the shift, the more

illuminating is the moment. Indeed, Ratcliffe contends that what does the heavy work of

disclosing ourselves to ourselves is the contrast between moods. We can only become

aware of our moods when they change.[115] Of course, not all mood changes will be

equally illuminating. For instance, "the descent into a deep depression is unlikely to be

philosophically enabling, although the process of recovering from it might well be."[116] In

the examples Heidegger provides, the train station appears boring as we struggle against

our boredom with the uninspiring setting. The evening appears boring when we realize

much later at home that we are no longer bored. The deepest form of boredom can only

appear when we are shaken out of our absorption in the world and things cease to matter

as they once did – as a world with only one possibility, the possibility to be boring. The

deeper the mood is the more pronounced the contrast will be, and thus, the more

illuminating the mood-shift. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes the mood in which

way, it is not what determines whether an entity *can be* significant in such a way. If anything, it is mood that has primacy over understanding, as mood is responsible for determining the shape of the possibility space within which understanding operates." (Ratcliffe, "Why Moods Matter," 161-162)

[115] Ratcliffe nuances the following point: "I propose that it is neither being in the mood nor having a memory of the mood that serves to inform. What does the work is the *contrast* between moods. It is shifts in the sense of belonging to a world that serve to illuminate; what one previously took for granted becomes salient and thus amenable to phenomenological reflection when it is lost or distorted. Heidegger does at least hint that mood changes more generally can plan a role in revealing how we find ourselves in a world: "It is precisely when we see the 'world' unsteadily and fitfully in accordance with our moods, that the ready-to-hand shows itself in its specific worldhood, which is never the same from day to day" (BT 138)." (Ibid., 169)

[116] Ibid., 169.

things cease to matter as anxiety [*Angst*].[117] In this way, being thrown into anxiety is always an illuminating mood-shift.

Ratcliffe's presentation of moods raises good questions concerning the different types of moods and the phenomenological work accomplished by the contrast between mood-shifts. Furthermore, Ratcliffe's reading shows us that moods are fundamental to what Heidegger means by 'meaning', and that they are at least as primordial as interpretation and understanding. Another critic, Josh Michael Hayes, also makes an argument for the primacy of moods. Hayes examines the pre-ontological character of moods, which make experience possible, and their "pre-thematic intentional character", which makes it possible for humans to relate intentionally with things in the world.[118] In other words, Hayes maintains that moods have ontic-ontological priority insofar as they ground both how we relate to things in the world, and that we relate to things at all (*i.e.,* moods ground relations as such). Furthermore, inasmuch as they are pre-given, moods show us *that* things matter, and that *how* they matter is not entirely up to us.[119] He argues

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[117] In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* Heidegger discusses boredom at length as a fundamental mood. In "What is Metaphysics?" too, Heidegger mentions boredom as a ground mood and also joy.

[118] Hayes, "Being-affected,"159.

[119] Hayes puts it in the following way: "Our moods as ontic phenomena indicate the pre-ontological status of disposedness which discloses being-in-a-world as a whole. Such a pre-ontological status should not be confused with some kind of psychic phenomenon of apprehension that enables reflection upon a particular experience or some kind of inner condition that makes itself manifest by our composure to a given situation. Rather, moods arise out of being-in-a-world to disclose the world, our being-there with others, and existence. Heidegger claims that moods also possess a pre-thematic intentional character which makes it possible to direct oneself toward something, thereby permitting that which is within the world to be encountered through circumspection (*Umsicht*). However, circumspection is not just a bare sensing or staring at something, rather circumspection implies a kind of becoming-affected (*Betroffenwerdens*) so the world becomes essentially meaningful to us. Disposedness as a way of being-in-a-world can thus be understood as a transcendence which precedes sensory perception, cognition, volition, or even what we might characterize as "feelings." What we commonly indicate as "feelings" or "affections" in which we can be "touched" (*konnen sie "geruhrt" warden*) by anything or have a sense for (*Sinn haben fur*) something

that only disposedness [*Befindlichkeit*] or mood can disclose understanding.

Understanding, however, cannot reveal itself to itself without an appropriate mood.[120]

Therefore, Hayes contends mood discloses originary transcendence.

Hayes, like Ratcliffe, highlights the importance of the passivity of being. Both critics show us that *the passivity of the thrownness of moods is fundamental, and therefore, constitutive of the meaning of being and likewise, essential to how we understand the meaning of 'meaning'.* Hayes makes a further point and expresses the connection between moods and transcendence – a move that establishes his argument beyond the pragmatist debate. Hayes' reading does not just operate within the framework of how we understand the meaning of 'meaning', but rather surpasses it by entering into the question of what constitutes the possibility of meaning. The question, however, is not the focus of Hayes' article and is left undeveloped. To bring the question more thoroughly into view, Thomas Sheehan traces the development of the thrownness of moods from the early Heidegger's determination of facticity to the later Heidegger's discussion of *Ereignis*.[121] He argues that Heidegger's main interest throughout his philosophical career has been the question of meaning and an investigation into "the a priori appropriation of man to the meaning-process."[122] Rather than look to anxiety [*Angst*] as a fundamental mood [*Grundstimmung*] of disclosure to understand the ground

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are only ontologically derived from this prior character of disposedness which has already submitted itself to having entities in the world "matter" to us by how we find ourselves in a certain mood." (Ibid., 159)

[120] Ibid., 158.

[121] Sheehan, "*Faciticity and* Ereignis," 42-68.

[122] Ibid., 42.

and meaning of being, Sheehan looks past moods to the deeper level of what constitutes

the possibility of having a mood at all, and argues that a fundamental meaning process

underpins being.

Sheehan's argument can be summarized in the following way: Things appear

meaningful because we are disposed to understand the world in a way that matters to us.

We are disposed to understand the world in a way that matters because things can also

cease mattering; likewise, we can live meaningful lives because we have the capacity for

meaninglessness as well. Things can cease mattering, and deeper still, we have the

capacity for meaninglessness due to one of our most primordial and distinctively human

features – death.[123] In other words, living *necessitates* encountering a meaningful

world.[124] To be delivered into existence is to be delivered into the meaning process. The

delivery is not a choice – it is therefore what we *have to do*.[125] Pushing the point further,

Sheehan highlights facticity as the way life and the meaning process is always *in medias*

res.[126] Existence *must* be meaningful. To be something *means* to be meaningful. We are

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[123] Sheehan writes: "The fact that sense-making *can* be taken away from each of us at any moment is what Heidegger means by mortality (*Sein zum Tode*; being ever at the point of death)… Mortality lets us make sense of… and in fact *requires* us to do so if we don't want to die." (Ibid., 47)

[124] As Sheehan succinctly writes: "If we can encounter something, we can make sense of it. If we cannot make sense of something, we cannot encounter it. We are the only entity for whom meaning makes a difference, and if sense-making were ever to be taken away from us, we would be no more. We have nowhere to go, no way to live, but meaning." (Ibid., 46-47)

[125] Sheehan contends: "The facticity of thrownness into meaning becomes utterly serious when we realize that meaning-making – our very way of staying alive – is possible only because we are mortal; and our mortality is the groundless ground for why we have to make sense." (Ibid., 47)

[126] As Sheehan puts it: "Facticity [*Faktizitat*] is the early Heidegger's term for man's a priori thrownness into the ability to give meaning and thus man's ability to understand this or that thing. Facticity is an essential component of being-in-meaning (*In-der-Welt-sein*). It is a preliminary name for man's appropriation to the *factum* of meaning-giving. From the first pages of *Being and Time* Heidegger insisted that what makes human being unique is that is *has* to be (*zu sein*)" (Ibid., 60)

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delivered over to the something that is meaningful. Our deliverance to meaning is what Heidegger means by the thrownness of facticity.[127] Alongside our thrownness into the meaning process, understanding indicates more than the practical uses of the world around us. It also indicates that things are understood in terms of their possibility. Understanding always understands in terms of possibility. Pressing into these possibilities is part of the meaning process of existence, and since existence arises from a pre-given world of meaningful relations, the understanding therefore implies the a priori transcendence of the meaning process and the world.

Sheehan's reading brings the basic human characteristic of mood to bear on the deeper meaning process of being and reveals that neither understanding [*Verständnis*] nor state-of-mind [*Befindlichkeit*] (and likewise neither interpretation [*Auslegung*] nor mood [*Stimmung*]) have primacy over other basic characteristics of being. Rather, *what underpins and constitutes meaning is the possibility that pervades all forms of life, all levels of being.*[128] In this way, Sheehan argues that the project of understanding being *is* the project of meaning.[129] I agree with Sheehan and will furthermore argue that, insofar

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[127] Notably, the pragmatist account of 'meaning' cannot describe the passivity from which normativity arises.

[128] In his conclusion, Sheehan writes: "This essay has argued that stepping out of the misleading discourse of "being" and taking one's stand in the phenomenological reduction of "being" to "meaning" not only is possible and necessary in itself but also clarifies the structure and function of appropriation and facticity. Both *Ereignis* and *Faktizitat* bespeak the same thing: the "fate" of human being as necessary for maintaining (holding open) the meaning-giving process. Given that the term "being" has a long-standing and solid claim to meaning "existing out there," phenomenology needs to subject it to the phenomenological reduction that alone, Heidegger claimed, give entry to his thought and, for him, sustained that thinking throughout his career." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 68)

[129] Ibid., 42.

as meaning can be understood as the transcendence of possibility or as transcendence as such, the project of meaning *is* the project of transcendence.

Conclusion:

At the outset of this chapter, my goal was to determine what Heidegger means by 'meaning'. I recast my aim in terms of interpretation: how should we read Heidegger (so that we can decide how we should understand what Heidegger means by 'meaning'). I looked at the path of thought developed by analytic and especially pragmatist readings of Heidegger, which tend to prioritize the practical orientation of the understanding in their description of the meaning of being. As a way of exploring what might be concealed by the pragmatist readings, I investigated state-of-mind and moods as essential features of the meaning of being. The discussion of moods allowed us to open a discussion of possibility, which was previously concealed by the pragmatist version of 'meaning'. Moods ultimately resist the practical orientation of the understanding. That is to say, my understanding has a play of possible interpretations, and what ends up being my interpretation is determined by my mood, something over which I have no control. I can, claims Heidegger, choose to respond to my mood in certain ways, but *the moodiness of my mood* is not my choice, and yet, it is an essential part of my being. Therefore, the passivity of facticity is fundamentally pervasive.

In a sense, however, even moods do not fully disclose what Heidegger means by 'meaning'. Interpretation is only part of the picture, and moods are another – both are grounding characteristics of being. The benefit of investigating moods is that passivity is

built into the discussion – an aspect of being for the most part overlooked by the tradition of philosophy and an aspect of Heidegger's philosophy mostly passed over by pragmatist readings. When we reflect on passivity we discover something that underlies activity, or perhaps more precisely, something that recedes as we press into our possibilities. The lack of control over our moods is the first indication of what later Heidegger discusses as the withdrawal or refusal of being. I will argue that the idea of withdrawal or refusal or receding is crucial to understanding what Heidegger means by possibility and ultimately transcendence.

I have not yet established what exactly Heidegger means by 'meaning', but I have begun to trace a path of reading. It appears that the pragmatist version of 'meaning' conceals a deeper condition upon which the pragmatist view is itself contingent. Likewise, prioritizing moods also seems to obscure what makes 'meaning' possible. In the next chapter, I will continue my investigation into understanding 'meaning' as possibility. In addition to further exploring Thomas Sheehan's argument, my discussion in the following section is very much inspired by Iain Macdonald's essay "What Is, Is More than It Is"[130] and by Otto Pöggeler's essay "Being as Appropriation"[131] and his book *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*[132]. With these critics as my guide, I will continue to bring my own reading of Heidegger into view as I develop my investigation

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[130] Iain Macdonald, "'What Is, Is More Than It is': Adorno and Heidegger on the Priority of Possibility," *Internation Journal of Philosophical Studies* 1, Vol. 19 (2011): 31-57.

[131] Otto Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," in *Heidegger & Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, 84-115 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

[132] Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Amherst: Humanity Books, 1991).

of the question of the meaning of 'meaning' as it pertains to the problem of

transcendence.

2   *The Possibility of Meaning*

Introduction:

In the present chapter, I will continue exploring the question of the meaning of 'meaning' and attempt to deepen the path of thought revealed in the previous chapter. One of the most important insights we gained so far is that meaning is not solely captured in the activity of understanding [*Verständnis*] or in the passivity of mood [*Stimmung*], but in the transcendent relation between the two.[1] Following the conclusion we reached at the end of the first chapter, *the primary goal of the present chapter is to continue refining our reading of Heidegger such that it captures the relation between meaning and transcendence.* That is to say, the question concerning meaning can be understood as the problem of transcendence.[2]

In order to bring the main aim of this chapter more plainly into view, it is important to work through, at least in a preliminary fashion, the progression between the path of reading I have developed and the path of reading to come, as well as the connection between reading, meaning and transcendence. In an effort to determine how we should understand the meaning of

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[1] As Heidegger writes: "Being, as the basic theme of philosophy, is no class of genus of entities; yet it pertains to every entity. Its 'universality' is to be sought higher up. Being and the structure of Being lie beyond every entity and every possible character which an entity may possess. *Being is the transcendens pure and simple*. And the transcendence of Dasein's Being is distinctive in that it implies the possibility and the necessity of the most radical *individuation*. Every disclosure of Being as the *transcendens is transcendental* knowledge. *Phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of Being) is veritas transcendentalis*." (BT 62/SZ 38)

[2] It is interesting to note that although the problem of transcendence has not yet been directly addressed, our path has been indirectly bound to it. After all, reading Heidegger *is* to understand and interpret Heidegger. Understanding and interpreting Heidegger concerns how we as readers relate to Heidegger's work. The difficulty, then, is determining just *what is our relationship to Heidegger's work? What is the nature of the relation, and how do we understand it?* In a sense, the problem of determining how we should read Heidegger is an example of the problem of transcendence – *i.e.,*the problem of how we characterize something that goes beyond itself. Although it is not yet clear how exactly we should read Heidegger, or how exactly we should characterize the meaning of 'meaning', one thing is becoming clear: we have already begun to grapple with the problem of transcendence.

'meaning' and the problem of transcendence, I worked through a leading debate in Heideggerian scholarship, namely, the debate between pragmatist and non-pragmatist readings of the early Heidegger.[3] As I elucidated, pragmatist critics tend to prioritize understanding [*Verständnis*], *i.e.,* human activity and all *the things we can do*. Conversely, the non-pragmatist critics I investigated tended to prioritize moods, *i.e.,* human affectivity and all the *things that affect and hold sway over us*. Another way to describe the debate is as a polarity between the primacy of activity on the one hand, and the primacy of passivity on the other. At the end of the first chapter, I introduced another way to understand the meaning of 'meaning' in Heidegger; as Thomas Sheehan puts it, meaning can be understood as a self-transcending process.[4] From Sheehan's perspective, meaning involves activity *and* passivity, doing things *and* having things done to us, concomitantly revealing *and* concealing ourselves.[5] Indeed, meaning involves *what I can choose to do and be* as well as *what I cannot choose to do and be* – although one aspect is intelligible to me and the other is not, both features are equally disclosive of my being. Rather than thinking of the complementary features as joined or connected as A *and* B, activity and passivity should be understood as fundamentally entangled. The challenge is to approach the complex relation in a way that allows the involvedness to show itself. At the end of the first chapter, I thus arrived at a clue to how we should read Heidegger – neither through the precepts of pragmatism nor as

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[3] For example, in the previous chapter I looked at pragmatists such as Hubert Dreyfus, William Blattner and Taylor Carman who prioritize the pervasiveness of understanding and interpretation. I also looked at critics who prioritize the pervasiveness of moods, such as Matthew Ratcliffe and Josh Michael Hayes.

[4] As Thomas Sheehan sets out his thesis in "Facticity and *Ereignis*", his concern with meaning and transcendence is clear from the start: "This essay argues that throughout his writings Heidegger presupposed a phenomenological reduction of being to meaning. It then tests that thesis by re-interpreting two crucial terms in Heidegger's philosophy: *Ereignis* in the later period and facticity in the earlier, both of which come down to the same thing: the apriori appropriation of man to the meaning-process." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 42)

[5] Ibid., 45.

prioritizing the passivity of moods; as suggested by Sheehan, we should read Heidegger as a

transcendental philosopher concerned with the question of meaning.[6] I also refined our

understanding of the meaning of 'meaning' – we should understand it neither as the activity of

the understanding nor as the passivity of moods, but as a process of transcendence.[7]

What kind of reading can accomplish the task I have set for us? Is there a reading that

allows transcendence *as such*, our relation to the truly hidden part of existence – so hidden that it

retreats every time we attempt to find it – to show itself?[8] Keeping our questions concerning

reading in mind, the present chapter is divided into three sections. First, in order to again provide

a background for the reader, I will present an outline of Heidegger's understanding of the

transcendence of Dasein as it shows itself at the most banal level of existence – average

everydayness. I will do this for two reasons. In the first place, whatever transcendence *as such*

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[6] Heidegger writes: "We must be able to bring out clearly the difference between being and beings in order to make something like being the theme of inquiry. This distinction is not arbitrary; rather, it is the one by which the theme of ontology and thus of philosophy itself is first of all attained. It is a distinction which is first and foremost constitutive for ontology. We call it the *ontological difference* – the differentiation between being and beings. Only by making this distinction – krienin in Greek – not between on being and another being but between being and beings do we first enter the field of philosophical research. Only by taking this critical stance do we keep our own standing inside the field of philosophy. Therefore, in distinction from the sciences of the things that are, of beings, ontology, or philosophy in genera, is the critical science, or the science of the inverted world. With this distinction between being and beings and the selection of being as theme we depart in principle from the domain of beings. We surmount, it transcend it. We can also call the science of being, as critical science, *transcendental science*." (BPP 17/ GP 22-23)

[7] Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 46-47.

[8] These questions are inspired by Richard Polt's essay "The Events of Enthinking the Event" (Richard Polt, "The Event of Enthinking the Event," in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, ed. Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm, Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega, 81-104 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)) in which he discusses the complexities of thinking *Ereignis*. The main point is how do we think a term such as *Ereignis*, which stands beyond the dichotomies of our metaphysical thinking? How do we think something that our thinking is not free to think? Polt's discussion of *Erdenken* as key to preparing thought to think Heidegger's path in *Contributions to Philosophy* is helpful in reading *Contributions* as well inspiring to the reflections on reading and meaning in my dissertation.

means, it is clear that it must appear at all levels of existence.[9] Therefore, in order to establish a context from which we can investigate the issue deeply, it is important to follow Heidegger's phenomenological method and to describe the most basic transcendence of the average person, understood as the 'they' [*das Man*], going about their everyday activities, chatting in their idle way, and living out their average possibilities.[10] In the second place, I will lay out central terms and ideas in the early Heidegger's *Being and Time* in order to facilitate our discussion of the later Heidegger's determination of the problem of transcendence. To be sure, a preliminary introduction to the transcendence of Dasein determined by the early Heidegger is necessary to understand the later Heidegger's development of the transcendence of being. The aim of the first section is therefore to contextualize the following discussion.

In the second section, I will investigate one of the principal terms in the later Heidegger's works, namely, *Ereignis*.[11] Tellingly, there is a lack of agreement on how to translate the term.

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[9] Heidegger's priorities are clear on the first page of his *magnus opus*: "Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word 'being'? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being*. But are we nowadays even perplexed at our inability to understand the expression 'Being'? Not at all. So first of all we must reawaken an understanding for the meaning of this question. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of *Being* and to do so concretely. Our provisional aim is the Interpretation of *time* as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being." (BT 19/SZ 1)

[10] The discussion here is taken from BT, Div. 1, Ch. 4.

[11] The discussion of *Ereignis* comes predominantly from Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)* (Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012)). There is, however, some debate over the centrality of the term in the later Heidegger's works. Some critics, such as Richard Polt, argue that *Ereignis* is traceable in the early Heidegger and has always been an important term. Indeed, Polt advances the argument in his essay "*Ereignis*" (Richard Polt, "*Ereignis*," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall, 375-391 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)). In fact, I will refer to Polt's excellent essay later in the dissertation. For a discussion of the early and young Heidegger, see also the well-known books: Theodor Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); John Van Buren, *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). Richard Capobianco, however, disagrees with the centrality of the term and argues that *Ereignis* is a "refreshed" name for Being (Richard

The term is sometimes interpreted as an 'appropriation', other times as an 'event' or a

'happening', it is also construed as an 'enowning'. Since the translation of the term is fairly

contentious, I will use the original German.[12] We are interested in *Ereignis* inasmuch as the later

Heidegger argues that it is the ground of being and essential to inceptual thinking. [13] *Ereignis* is

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Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 37), and provides an excellent breakdown of the published and unpublished works that feature the term *Ereignis* (an exercise he does in order to prove his point that the somewhat new interest in the term is generated by excitement over the growing *Gesaumtausgabe* and the publication of the *Beiträge Zur Philosophophie (Vom Ereignis)* and not by even-minded investigation of Heidegger's published works between 1936-1944 in which *Ereignis* is hardly discussed). It is not clear, however, that the distinction between published and unpublished works is a good way to determine what is and is not relevant or central to a philosopher's path of thought especially when the unpublished works are voluminous and arguably rich in insight.

[12] In the "Translator's Foreword" of Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy(from Enowning)* (Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, translator's foreword to *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, by Martin Heidegger, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), xv-xliv), Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly discuss their choice of using 'enowning' as a translation for '*Ereignis*'. They contend that 'enowning' captures the possibility of "enabling" and "welling up of" implied in the term *Ereignis*. Moreover, they argue that 'enowning' implies a passive type of owning, that is, an owning without ownership or without "owning of something". They also argue that leaving the term untranslated is itself a translation, and complicates the task of writing. Something, after all, must be said about the term, they contend. If the term itself is not translated, the task of description and writing is rendered more difficult, they argue. Emad and Maly also take issue with other popular translations such as "event", "appropriation", and "befitting". They discount the first term based on the spatio-temporal implications of an event – an event happens in a time and place, but all things that occur in time and space arise from Ereignis. Therefore, the translators identify a type of reductio ad absurdum in translations of the term that use the word "event". The translators also criticize "appropriation", most notably, for the fact that it implies a strong sense of activity in the seizure of something. *Ereignis*, however, should be understood as something more passive than active. Finally, 'befitting' is discounted for its sense of completion and self-sufficiency. Something is befitting if it is total and complete, and not, as *Ereignis* implies, a process (xix-xxvii). Despite their good arguments, it is not clear that 'enowning' implies a passive owning without ownership. Because there are good and bad aspects to all the translations, and yet we need to settle on *a* translation in order to proceed, I will use the original *Ereignis*. At the very least, it will be clear what I am referring to and in that way avoid a confusion of terms. In this way, I agree with Richard Capobianco's argument in *Engaging Heidegger* (Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 35).

[13] Heidegger writes of the importance of *Ereignis* in the following passage: "In other words, beings are brought into their *constancy* through the *downgoing* of those who ground the truth of being. Beyng itself requires this. It needs those who go down and has already *appropriated* them, assigned them to itself, wherever beings appear. That is the essential occurrence of beyng itself; we call this essential occurrence the *event*. Measureless is the richness of the turning relation of beyng to the Da-sein it appropriates, incalculable the fullness of the appropriation. Yet only very little speaking of "of the event" is possible here in this thought that is making a beginning. What is said is questioned and thought in the "interplay" between the first and the other beginning, out of the "resonating" of beyng

necessary to think the other beginning of philosophy[14] (*i.e.,* the transcendence of being), the beginning of philosophy that is concealed by the one granted.[15] In this way, *Ereignis* is essential to understanding the meaning of 'meaning' in the later Heidegger and the problem of transcendence (especially as it pertains to the transcendence of being).[16] The goal of the section is to gain some clarity on what Heidegger means by *Ereignis* and to begin to build a groundwork from which I will read the early Heidegger's determination of the problem of transcendence. Thus, the aim of the second section is both exegetical and preparatory.

From our investigation into *Ereignis*, a question will appear: Why is there a happening at all? What constitutes the possibility of *Ereignis*? Can we reveal the ground of something that is

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in the plight of the abdonment by being, for the "leap" into beyng, toward the "grounding" of its truth, as preparing the "future ones" of "the last god."" (CP 8/BZP 6-7) See also Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 52.

[14] It is not the goal of this dissertation to provide an in depth investigation into the meaning of the other beginning. For a brief introduction into the complexity of the term, see: Alejandro Vallega, "Beyng-Historical Thinking," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall, 48-65 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)).

[15] Heidegger writes in "The transition to the other beginning": "The question of beings must be brought to its proper ground, i.e., to the question of the truth of beyng. And thinking (representing), which previously constituted the guideline and the horizonal structure of every interpretation of beings, is to be taken back into the grounding of the truth of beyng, i.e., back into *Da-sein*. "Logic," as the theory of correct thinking, then becomes meditation on the sense of *language* as the naming that gounds the truth of beyng. And as for beyng, hitherto understood in the form of beingness as the most general and most familiar, it now becomes as even the most unique and most alienating. The *transition* to the other beginning carries out a *division*, on that does not in the least run between philosophical movements (idealism-realism, etc.) or even between the stances of different "worldviews." The transition divides the ascent of beyng and the grounding of the truth of beyng in Da-sein from all occurrences and apprehendings of beings." (CP 139/BZP 176-177)

[16] Heidegger describes inceptual thinking in the following way: "Inceptual thinking is the inventive thinking of the truth of beyng and thus is the fathoming of the ground. In its resting on the ground, such thinking manifests, first and only, its grounding, gathering, and retaining power… That the questioning rests on the ground means that it finds its way into the extreme domain of oscillation, into the belonging to the most extreme occurrence, which is the *turning in the event*." (CP 46/BZP 56-58) Moreover, *Ereignis* lends itself especially well to our investigation of the problem of transcendence insofar as a sense of reciprocity, concealment, and ultimately transcendence, is built into the implications of the term.

partly indescribable? Can we describe hiddenness *as* hiddenness? Or will our description betray the very hiddenness we aim to unhide?[17] In the third section, I will examine another way of thinking about the transcendence inherent in the term *Ereignis*. In effect, I will investigate the relation between *what is* and *is not*. In particular, I will prioritize the concealment of what *is not*, that is, concealment *as such*, as another way into our investigation of the problem of transcendence. In other words, I will investigate existence from the starting point of what *disappears* and what *is not shown*, rather than from what *appears* and what *is shown*.[18] Clearly, the task is not an easy one. After all, *how do we describe what is not shown?* Although a precise definition of what disappears from view is difficult to render, the goal is to begin clarifying the problem of transcendence especially as Heidegger discusses it in its most fundamental form – as the transcendence of being. Thus, the aim of the third section is mostly exploratory.

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[17] The leading influence on my path of thought in this section is: Macdonald, "What Is, Is More than It Is," 37-51.

[18] This just *is* Heidegger's phenomenological way: "What is it that phenomenology is to 'let us see'? What is it that must be called a 'phenomenon' in a distinctive sense? What is it that by its very essence is *necessarily* the theme whenever we exhibit something *explicitly*? Manifestly, it is something that proximally and for the most part does *not* show itself at all: it is something that lies *hidden*, in contrast to that which promixally and for the most part does show itself; but at the same time it is something that belongs to what thus shows itself, and it belongs to it so essentially as to constitute its meaning and its ground." (BT 59/SZ 35)

Section 1: What does Heidegger say about average everyday transcendence? – a general overview with an emphasis on the They [*das Man*]

As I discussed in the first chapter, Heidegger contends that humans for the most part understand themselves practically in relation to things, other humans, and even in relation to themselves and their projects.[19] Nevertheless, although we ordinarily act according to tasks, our functionality arises from a deeper condition that resists functional, technological ways of being. In an effort to understand why humans have this efficient comportment and to disclose the more primordial condition, Heidegger asks: What type of being comports itself in this technological way most of the time? Who determines meaning as efficiency and serviceability?[20] Heidegger's response is: the 'they' [*das Man*]. Although the main goal of this section is to provide a context for the following sections, it will also be important to address the being for whom everyday meaning is significant for two interrelated reasons. First, since one of the goals of this chapter seeks to clarify how transcendence is given in the term 'meaning', we must not only understand the term 'meaning', but also the being who determines meaning. Beginning as Heidegger does with existence as it appears most of the time, I will follow his phenomenological method and also begin at the level of the most banal, average everyday level. Since the broad goal in the present chapter is to describe the *relation* between meaning and transcendence, I need to begin our analysis of the relation as it appears most of the time. I will therefore attend to the average meaning of everyday humans – whom Heidegger calls the 'they' – and attempt to disclose the transcendence that is given in the 'they' (and likewise at all levels of being) as the 'they' live out

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[19] BT 120/SZ 87

[20] BT 149/SZ 114

their impersonal, average possibilities. Second, because my overall project is to address the problem of transcendence as it is determined by the early Heidegger, and one of the traditional problems with transcendence is that it often evokes a subject/object dichotomy, it is important that I begin clarifying how Heidegger overcomes the problem – an endeavour that I carry forward in later chapters as well. In a sense, I will begin to engage with Heidegger's project of the destruction of the history of ontology; by analyzing the meaning of the 'they', I will show among other things, that the 'they' bears transcendence within it and that for Heidegger, everyone in every moment of existence is going beyond their present possibilities, understanding more than they actively show, affected by their environment in ways of which they are not conscious, *being more than they actually are*. We are always implicitly and explicitly self-transcending.

If we begin by throwing ourselves into the business of the 'they', into the activity of ordinary existence, and observe average everydayness as Heidegger does – that is to say, phenomenologically – the question arises: *Why do humans behave this way?* To put the question otherwise, why are we *this* way most of the time instead of *another*, less efficient way? Heidegger describes inauthentic being as a form of necessary misunderstanding: because humans misunderstand themselves, they are able to accomplish the activities that fill their daily, busy lives. By misunderstanding itself, Heidegger means that Dasein covers over or flees from its existential structure, its horizon of possibility and the fact that it is the type of being who needs to fall into the anonymity of the 'they' in order to live a life.[21] In other words, humans avoid facing what they really are (*i.e.,* mortal and finite) in order to be something functional and part of

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[21] BT 164/SZ 126

a reliable and significant network (*i.e.,* seemingly immortal and infinite). Yet another way to put this would be to say that without some degree of self-misunderstanding, humans would be incapacitated by an overwhelming anxiety over the inevitability of death. As Heidegger puts it, "Dasein does not, proximally and for the most part, have any explicit or even any theoretical knowledge of the fact that it has been delivered over to its death, and that death thus belongs to Being-in-the-world."[22]

Most of the time, our delivery over to death is far from thought; accomplishing tasks requires a task-oriented mindset, and we understand, at least implicitly, that if we want to get something done, the last thing we should think about is our death. Revealingly, one of the main ways death discloses itself to Dasein is in the state-of-mind termed 'anxiety', a fundamental mood [*Grundstimmung*] in which Dasein is confronted with its being: "That in the face of which one has anxiety is Being-in-the-world itself. That about which one has this anxiety is simply Dasein's potentiality-for-Being."[23] Anxiety can be violent or pacific, disruptive or calm, avoided or engaged with, but it is always a type of rupture or significant shift from average everydayness.[24] Crucially, the rupture is uprooting. That is to say, the usual way of doing things is easier and less burdensome than thinking about death and the meaning of life. It is therefore natural that humans tend to evade the question of the meaning of life – it is a harder thought to bear than to assume the question has already been answered. To avoid confronting the disturbance of anxiety, humans fall into the passivity, comfort and anonymity of the 'they'.

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[22] BT 295/ SZ 251

[23] BT 295/SZ 251

[24] For an extensive discussion of boredom, see Heidegger's *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.

Heidegger contends, the 'they' disburdens Dasein of the responsibility of choosing to be a self, it relieves Dasein of its responsibility to itself, it conceals Dasein from the mood of anxiety over its being and death, and ultimately it blinds or blocks Dasein from the question of the meaning of being.[25]

Part of the reason the flight into the 'they' is so disburdening is because the average human is comforted by a lack of difference. As Heidegger puts it, "one's concern with what one has taken hold of, whether with, for, or against, the Others, there is constant cares as to the way one differs from them."[26] Moreover, the "care about this distance between them is disturbing to being-with-one-another, though this disturbance is one that is hidden from it. If we may express this existentially, such Being-with-one-another has the character of *distantiality*."[27] The way humans are with other humans most of the time, that is, Dasein's being-with, is characterized by how one differs from the group, how one measures-up to the group. Dasein falls into the 'they' to escape the anxiety of its death and individuality, a fall into the averageness of the public that can be disturbed by difference. It is a natural course, then, that ordinary, comfortable, norm-seeking Dasein should fear difference from the group. The difference and subsequent distance Dasein with-others feels reinforces its tacit fear of the alienation of death. Distance from the group reminds Dasein of the fact that it is inescapably finite and as such, there is an insuperable chasm between itself and other Dasein. Therefore, Dasein exhibits norm-following tendencies in order to flee from its disturbances over distantiality. The 'they' is not a group of people

[25] BT 165-168/SZ 127-130

[26] BT 163/SZ 126

[27] BT 164/SZ 126

consisting of individuals. It is an anonymous social form to which Dasein always already

belongs and a "negative" symptom of its mineness, individuation and choosing to be a Self.

If Dasein strives to evade difference and is *not a self* in the 'they', *who*, then, is Dasein as

the 'they'? What is the meaning of the they-self? The answer is: Nobody. As the 'they',

"[e]veryone is the other, and no one is himself."[28] By falling into the anonymous, impersonal

social construct of the 'they', Dasein abandons its capacity for self-interpretation, self-

articulation or any form of self-relation and allows itself to be "taken away by the Others."[29] The

they-self does not think for itself, it allows the group to think for it and it allows the group to

think it. In the 'they', there are no personal pleasures, no individual tastes, no unique opinions:

> "We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* take pleasure; we read,
> see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; likewise we
> shrink back from the 'great mass' as *they* shrink back; we find 'shocking'
> what *they* find shocking. The "they", which is nothing definite, and
> which all are, though not as the sum, prescribes the kind of Being of
> everydayness."[30]

What is the 'they' characterized by? Averageness, the way that everyday Dasein

sediments and embeds itself in its everydayness. Averageness leads Dasein to the anonymous

being-with through the tendency to "keep watch over everything exceptional that thrusts itself to

the fore."[31]

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[28] BT 165/SZ 128

[29] BT 164/SZ 126

[30] BT 164/SZ 127-128

[31] BT 165/SZ 127

In point of fact, average possibilities are predetermined by the 'they' – how to think, how to act, what to care about, what to dismiss. All modes of life have an accompanying average way to be. For the most part, humans live within the circumscribed field of average possibilities. Notably, average possibilities are given to us and are concealed by our average understanding. For average everdayness to function, average possibilities must remain hidden within the web of significance – they must not appear *as* possibilities. As the 'they', we take up our average possibilities unreflectively, unquestioningly, removing from us the possibility of self-understanding. Concealing possibility of self-understanding (*i.e.*, of seeing possibility *as* possibility) is the work and nature of the public.[32] As Heidegger contends:

> "Distantiality, averageness, and levelling down, as ways of Being for the 'they', constitute what we know as 'publicness'. Publicness proximally controls every way in which the world and Dasein get interpreted, and it is always right – not because there is some distinctive and primary relationship-of-Being in which it is related to 'Things', or because it avails itself of some transparency on the part of Dasein which it has explicitly appropriated, but because it is insensitive to every difference of level and of genuiness and thus never gets to the 'heart of the matter'. By publicness everything gets obscured, and what has thus been covered up gets passed off as something familiar and accessible to everyone."[33]

Thus, the 'they'-self is Dasein in its average everydayness levelling down its own possibilities and allowing itself to fall into the anonymity of inauthentic being-with [*Mitsein*]. In more simple terms, part of the meaning of the 'they'-self is a forgetfulness of the meaning of

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[32] BT 164/SZ 127

[33] BT 165/SZ 127

being. Far from a pejorative fact though, the narrowed scope of average possibilities *is* what allows the average human to cope with the demands of life in a state of relative ease.

Taking a step back and looking once again at life as it is lived most of the time, it is clear language is one of the most basic ways that humans express their averageness and everydayness. Just as Dasein is involved with the world equipmentally, average everyday Dasein understands and interprets language as ready-to-hand, as equipmental, as meaningful according to use, although it does so pre-reflectively. Indeed "[l]anguage is a totality of words – a totality in which discourse has a 'worldly' being of its own; and as an entity within-the-world, this totality thus becomes something which we may come across as ready-to-hand."[34] From a different perspective, language is putting into words that which is already made intelligible or significant through understanding and interpretation. Language is for the most part ready-to-hand. It can be readily accessible, used to communicate small or great thoughts, and, moreover, it is used most of the time without us noticing that we are using it. At certain times, it can also be present-at-hand; I may not know the right word to use to describe how I am feeling, I may be in a foreign country where I do not speak the language and all communication breaks down, or I can analyze language theoretically.[35]

Notably, understood as way Dasein articulates intelligibility (or, in other words, a way being interprets understanding), language not only reflects, but also determines meaning. From this conclusion, there are two further points I would like to make with regards to language: first,

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[34] BT 204/SZ 161

[35] "Language can be broken up into word-Things which are present-at-hand. Discourse is existentially language, because that entity disclosedness it Articulates according to significations, has, as its kind of Being, Being-in-the-world – a Being which has been thrown and submitted to the 'world'." (BT 204/SZ 161)

how language as a specified interpretation further embeds Dasein in self-misunderstanding; second, how language, as a determinant of meaning, in fact discloses Dasein's implicit understanding. In specifying interpretation, language is both a way for Dasein to make more specific choices with respect to its possibilities and a way that Dasein widens the gap between itself and primordial self-understanding. In stating that she will use the phone to make a business call, the woman and mother from our earlier example concomitantly makes a more specific interpretation of the telephone and also removes herself further from the possibility of understand the existential structures that allow her to make such an assertion in the first place. Everyday language is a way for Dasein to further embed itself inauthentically in its throwness and engagement with the world, at least insofar as it particularizes Dasein's possibility and thereby conceals other possible involvements with the world. Therefore, everyday language is one of the ways Dasein concretizes its flight from self-understanding.

Furthermore, being able to make linguistic assertions presupposes that there is an understanding and interpretation of what a thing is. To be able to say that she will use the telephone to make a business call presupposes that the mother already understand and can interpret the telephone (*i.e.,* meaning as the meaning of objects in the world) and that she already has a general understanding of the structure of language or the possibility of discourse (*i.e.,* meaning as linguistic meaning). In effect, to say that the woman will use the phone is not only disclosive of her understanding of the words involved in the particular speech act, but also and more importantly, it is disclosive of her understanding of the "essence" of the telephone, and thus (and this is one of the central stakes of fundamental ontology), it is disclosive of her

discursive determination of the essential meaning of the telephone and of the possibility of her being.[36]

On the other hand, if we look at the relation between meaning and language from the more passive side of things, from the viewpoint of thrownness, we discover that language is not only an active specification and determination of meaning, it is also passively deployed by average humans. We are thrown into the tradition and legacy of language, we appropriate it implicitly, and make sense of the world and what matters to us through it. *That* we express ourselves through language is not really our choice; nor is the *way* language articulates our possibility our choice. We are submitted to the world of language and, through the submission, we are delivered into our immediate and our average possibilities. Possibilities are opened by language through the actual possibilities that it specifies. Likewise, possibilities are concealed by language due to our passive absorption in the world of language. Either way we look at language, we find the basic character of transcendence. Meaning and language share a reciprocal relation characterized by transcendence, a transcendence that exists at the most average and immediate level. Thus, Dasein presses into the possibilities of its world through the equiprimordial process of understanding and assertion, a process made available to Dasein from the worldly network of significations.

Returning now to the overarching issue concerning the meaning of 'meaning', the 'they' is related to average everyday meaning in the following way: Dasein appropriates meaning through its involvement with the network of useful relations and the world. Its average everyday

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[36] "What the discourse is about is a structural item that it necessarily possesses; for discourse helps to constitute the disclosedness of Being-in-the-world and in its own structure it is modeled upon this basic state of Dasein." (BT 205/SZ 162)

involvement with things is characterized by the in-order-to structure. Therefore, average everyday meaning is equipmental. Since Heidegger contends that meaning is disclosive of the being that determines meaning, the kind of being capable of determining meaning as use must also in part be meaningful according to the deployment of the in-order-to structure; Dasein as the 'they' also understands its everyday meaning and average possibilities in terms of use and efficiency. Furthermore, one of the basic ways that the 'they' expresses its average possibilities is through language.

I will emphasize two further points before concluding the present section. First, according to Heidegger, transcendence occurs even in our most immediate, absorbed, and busy activities. As we talk without thinking, or cope without understanding our coping, *we are more than we actually are*. As I continue my investigation in the following chapters, I will show that transcendence is pervasive – there is nothing without it; to be *is* to be transcendence. Transcendence is a basic character that pervades all levels of life. Second, just as a linguistic assertion presupposes a pre-reflective understanding and interpretation (*i.e.,* a complex context from which the possibility of assertion arises), so too does reading presuppose a pre-reflective understanding and interpretation (*i.e.,* a complex context from which the possibility of reading arises). The relation between language and meaning *is* the relation between reading and meaning. Unlike our most common ways of talking, however, our reading of Heidegger should be self-aware such that its own context (*i.e.,* the *fact* that it is always in part concealed) can show itself. Therefore, we will continue to read with a gaze towards the pre-reflective, towards the context from which our reading arises so that the passive delivery of our reading can be an ongoing issue.

Section 2: Reading meaning as *Ereignis*

As I transition from the early Heidegger on the pervasiveness of transcendence in the average everyday to the later Heidegger on the transcendence and meaning of *Ereignis,* a few points should be understood concerning the development of Heidegger's thought. The later Heidegger is sometimes described as having modified his early focus on the existential analytic of Dasein, phenomenology and fundamental ontology to a more poetic discussion of questions concerning art, technology, poetry and the task of thinking.[37] As it is the case with many issues in Heidegger, even the shift just described is debatable.[38] There are critics who see a radical break in philosophical interests between the early and later Heidegger, and who clearly demarcate the two sides of the rupture by adopting William Richardson's well known categories:

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[37] In *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger* (Jean Grondin, *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1987)), Jean Grondin argues that the turn in Heidegger should be understood as a deepening of early themes. (Grondin, *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger*, 12) Grondin writes: « Toutefois, si Heidegger a lui-meme lance la parole d'un tournant dans sa philosophie, il n'en a pas moins toujours insiste sur la continuite de son itineraire intellectual. *Sein und Zeit* n'a jamais ete recuse. Alors pourquoi parler d'un tournant ou d'un renversement, plutot que d'une evolution, d'une conitnuite ou d'une progression, fut-elle retrograde, au sens du *Schritt zuruck*? Cette situation fait bel et bien probleme : si le point de depart n'est pas rejete, en quel sens et de quel droit parler d'une *Kehre*? Question qui a déjà fait travailler bien des esprits. Certains mettent l'accent sur la continuite (la « droite » Heideggerienne, pourrait-on dire, dispose a accepter de facon non critique la reinterpretation ontologisante, donc resolument anti-subjectiviste des existentiaux de *Etre et temps* dans les ecrits posterieurs a 1937), d'autres n'y voient que rupture (la « gauche », celle qui s'eloigne le plus de l'orthodoxie en mettant en doute la lecture jugee trop harmonisante que Heidegger propose de la *Kehre*), tandis que d'autres, ceux du centre, plus pres de la verite, constatent, sans effacer les ambiguites, l'approfondissement ou la poursuite d'une seule et meme question sous des titres et des imperatifs differents.» (12) The debate Grondin refers to in his book is most notably discussed in the following well-known books: Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (New York: Humanity Books, 1991); William Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

[38] See Jean Grondin, *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger*.

Heidegger I and Heidegger II.[39] There are other critics who read Heidegger's corpus as one

continuous and consistent body of work in which his later works are an ontological

reinterpretation of the early works (a deeper look at the existential structure of Dasein).[40] Other

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[39] See William Richardson, *From Phenomenology to Thought*. Another important convention is the distinction of 'the Heidegger of *Being and Time*' to identify the Heidegger of his *magnus opus* in distinction from his other early works.

[40] In "The unity of Heidegger's Thought" (Frederick A. Olafson, "The unity of Heidegger's thought," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon, 97-121 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999)), for example, Frederick A. Olafson argues for a unity of Heidegger's thought. He contends that the later works are a reorientation of his earlier investigation from *Being and Time*, and that without a good foundation in the earlier Heidegger, the later Heidegger cannot be properly understood (98). Arguably, Otto Pöggeler's well-known book, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, makes a similar though mitigated argument. Pöggeler's book concentrates on describing Heidegger's way of thinking, rather than on making an argument about how to read Heidegger. Of course, describing Heidegger's way of thought involves a reading, but the description is more exploratory than an argument such as Olafson's, which adopts a reading and follows through with the application of its interpretive framework. The spirit of Pöggeler's book very much informs our path of exploration. See also Dorothea Frede's essay "The question of being" (Dorothea Frede, "The question of being," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon, 42-69 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999)) in which she argues that Heidegger's interest in the meaning of being was persistent throughout his career, however, the later works show an emphasis on the passivity of existence, which she takes as proof that Heidegger should not be read as "a predecessor of the "new pragmatism"" (66). See also Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann's "*Contributions to Philosophy* and Enowning-Historical Thinking" (Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, "*Contributions to Philosophy* and Enowning-Historical Thinking," in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, ed. Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm, Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega, 105-126 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)) for another essay that argues the later Heidegger (especially the Heidegger from *Contributions*) is a development or inward "transformation" (not a turn away) from the early works; in fact, *Contributions* "will be sufficiently grasped only if this thinking is understood as emerging from within that transformation – *i.e.,* when we see clearly and unambiguously what it is that Heidegger gives up and what it is that he retains in making the crossing from the fundamental-ontological pathway of the question of being into the being-historical pathway of this question." (von Herrmann, "Enowning-Historical Thinking," 105). For another perspective, one that argues the temporality of *Contributions* cannot be captured in terms of when it was written (*i.e.,* it cannot be understood in terms of it its chronological place in Heidegger's corpus), see William McNeill's "The Time of *Contributions to Philosophy*" (William McNeill, "The Time of *Contributions to Philosophy*," in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, 129-149 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)). See also Bret W. Davis' "Returning the world to nature" (Bret W. Davis, "Returning the world to nature: Heidegger's turn from a transcendental-horizonal projection of world to an indwelling releasement to the open-region," *Continental Philosophy Review* 3-4, vol. 47 (2014): 373-397) for a recent perspective on the "turn" in Heidegger's thought. Davis argues that Heidegger's main interest has always been the relation between being and Dasein, that is, between the event and the site of its disclosure. Broadly construed, he contends that the turn is marked by a shift from an interest in the projection of world to the facticity of world. His discussion uses Heidegger's *Country Path Conversations* as its primary source.

critics fall somewhere in between the two opposing positions and argue that Heidegger has always been interested in the same question, the question concerning the meaning of being or more succinctly, the question of meaning.[41] The latter argument contends that Heidegger raises the question of meaning from different standpoints, thematizing various problems and using multiple paths of investigation.[42] The different paths can give the impression of radical shifts in thought, but the point is all the same: Heidegger investigates the fundamental meaning of being.

I arrive once again at a question concerning context and reading. Not only must I address the question, 'how shoul we read the early Heidegger?', but I must also ask, 'how should we read Heidegger's corpus?' In fact, the questions overlap in an important way. How we read the early Heidegger will affect how we read Heidegger's work as a whole. For example, pragmatist readings construe the early Heidegger as predominantly concerned with understanding [*Verständnis*] and human activity.[43] However, the later Heidegger does not show an overt interest in human activity or the appropriation of the understanding; rather, the topics addressed in the later Heidegger are typically seen as thematizing passivity and the *way* being appropriates humans.[44] As a result, pragmatist readings of the later Heidegger (when they *do* engage with the

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[41] See Thomas Sheehan's "Facticity and *Ereignis*" and Otto Pöggeler's "Being as Appropriation" and *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*. For a recent book that shares a similar argument, namely, that Heidegger's path of thought is a continuous investigation into a single problem, namely, the meaning of being, see Richard Capobianco's *Engaging Heidegger* and even more recently *Heidegger's Way of Being* (Richard Capobianco, *Heidegger's Way of Being* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014)). One benefit to Capobianco's books is that they take into consideration recent publications of Heidegger's works, a fact that lends Capobianco's reading of Heidegger's corpus more weight than older publications that cannot attest the same completion.

[42] See Grondin, *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger*,12.

[43] See chapter one, especially references to Hubert Dreyfus, William Blattner, and Taylor Carman.

[44] For example, in the foreword to Emad and Maly's translation of *Contributions to Philosophy* the translators refer to the syntax of Heidegger's work and suggest that "the incompleteness of the sentences" and "the occasional

later works) attempt to enfold the later Heidegger into the pragmatic understanding of the early Heidegger's concerns.[45] On the other hand, if the early Heidegger is read as prioritizing the passivity of moods or emphasizing the thrownness of facticity, then it is likely that the critic will interpret a relatively continuous thematic flow between the early and later Heidegger.[46] In the previous chapter, I argued that neither the pragmatist reading nor the reading that prioritizes moods fully captures the transcendence of meaning in the early Heidegger. Consequently, my reading of Heidegger's corpus will in part develop from my understanding of meaning as transcendence (and not one that prioritizes activity or passivity). Indeed, my reading will understand Heidegger's path as concerned with one basic question and problem – the question of meaning understood as the problem of transcendence.

Rather than directly continue the path of reading I began exploring in the first chapter, I will re-approach the path indirectly; in the present chapter I will leap forward to the later Heidegger's works. The goal is to use his later ideas concerning meaning to help develop my investigation of his early writings on meaning, an endeavour I will continue in the following chapter. The approach is by no means original;[47] arguably, the method stands the best chance of

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ambiguity" was a mark of Heidegger' view that "a more detailed unfolding of the syntax of this work would distract thinking from the thrust of questioning." (Emad and Maly, "translator's foreword," xvii-xviii)

[45] For example, Lee Braver and Hubert Dreyfus read Heidegger in this way. Notably, Braver nevertheless sees a clear break between the early and later Heidegger (Lee Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings* (London: Continuum, 2009), 3).

[46] Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 42-68; Olafson, "Unity of Heidegger," 97-121.

[47] For example, Thomas Sheehan reads *Ereignis* back into Heidegger's early discussion of facticity in "Facticity and *Ereignis*" (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 42-68). Even Hubert Dreyfus, who famously concentrates on the Division I of *Being and Time* in his book *Being-in-the-world*, adopts the method of reading backwards, so to speak, in his essay "Can There Be a Better Source of Meaning than Everyday Practices? Reinterpreting Division I of *Being and Time* in the Light of Division II" (Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Can There Be a Better Source of Meaning than Everyday

stirring fresh ideas and inspiring disclosive readings of Heidegger's corpus since the approach

does not presuppose that chronology is the only (or best) way to interpret a path of thought. A

chronological reading is not necessarily the most revealing method as it often takes for granted

that *chronology itself* is meaningful and the *correct* way to order ideas and events. Interrupting

the chronological path of reading might therefore reveal new possibilities. If Heidegger *does*

engage with the problem of transcendence throughout his philosophical path, if Heidegger

continues to think about what it means for something to go beyond itself (or, from another

perspective, to think about what is concealed), then the later Heidegger can provide clues to what

is hidden in his early texts.[48]

Practices? Reinterpreting Division I of *Being and Time* in the Light of Division II," in *Heidegger's Being and Time: Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt, 141-154 (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2005)).

[48] In an effort to remain aware of our reading and the context from which our investigation develops, it is important to note that although the method aims to open possibility, our present approach will nevertheless operate with an assumption, namely, that the later Heidegger continues to investigate the problem he introduced in his early writings. In other words, our interpretive presupposition is that Heidegger was in some ways always interested in the same thing – the transcendence of meaning – and the later Heidegger attempted to think the things that were yet unthought in his early works. The presupposition clearly situates us in the category of readers who read Heidegger's corpus as an investigation into one main problem from various angles. Evidently, part of our path of reading will be informed by the presupposition and will serve to investigate (and of course justify) the position. Hopefully, since we have our assumption in view, our reading will be able to take issue with itself in a manner that is self-disclosive. As Paul Ricoeur contends in "The Task of Hermeneutics", "hermeneutics is the theory of the operation of understanding in its relations to the interpretation of texts" and that any discussion or interpretation "is not neutral in the sense that it is meant to be free of presuppositions. Even hermeneutics itself puts us on guard against the illusion of such a claim to neutrality" (Paul Ricoeur, "The Task of Hermeneutics," in *Heidegger & Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, 141 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978)). The point is that all interpretations, all readings, all discussions come from a context and bear within them presuppositions. The most open approach is therefore one that recognizes *it has presuppositions*, one that stays open to self-examination, and ultimately one that understands there will nevertheless be blind-spots. Therefore, the approach of using Heidegger's later ideas to rouse a renewed reading of the early Heidegger will be one part of our path of reading. As Derrida puts it, "Writing is unthinkable without repression" (Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (London: Routlege, 1997), 226).

Section 2.1: What do pragmatists say about *Ereignis*?

My present interest concerns a very specific question: What is *Ereignis*? Or, what is the meaning of *Ereignis*? Before I begin the investigation, however, I need to first explain the reason for my present interest in *Ereignis*. The most prominent reason is given by Heidegger himself as he clearly indicates in his later works that *Ereignis* is the source and abyss-like ground [*Abgrund*] of being.[49] Since the ground of being can be understood as the meaning of being,[50] an investigation into the meaning of 'meaning' in the later Heidegger must in some way take issue with *Ereignis*. In the later Heidegger, then, our gaze shifts from his earlier discussion of the thrown projection of Dasein (of humans in the meaning process of understanding and interpreting the mattering world in which they find themselves all the time) to *Ereignis* (broadly construed, the appropriation of humans by the historical-meaning-process). In other words, while the early Heidegger asks questions concerning the constituting features of humans and the conditions of possibility of their comportment as a way to disclose the meaning of existence, the later Heidegger asks why there is existence and meaning at all.[51] The later Heidegger reveals and

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[49] Heidegger discusses the possibility of thinking the other beginning: ""Beyng" does not simply mean the actuality of the actual, and not simply the possibility of the possible, and in general not simply being [*Sein*] understood on the basis of particular beings; instead, it means beyng out of its original essential occurrence in the full fissure. Nor is "essential occurrence" limited "presence."" (CP 60/BZP 74-76)

[50] As Heidegger describes the fundamental connection between reasons, truth and transcendence in *The Essence of Reasons*: "If the essence of reasons has an inner relationship to the essence of truth, then the *problem* of reasons can likewise be at home only where the essence of truth derives its inner possibility, namely, in the essence of transcendence." (ER 29/VWG 28)

[51] Pöggeler's describes Heidegger's path: "Heidegger thinks his single thought, in that he goes back to what metaphysics left unthought, and thus frees himself for a thought yet to come. His thinking is a *way of thinking* and not simply a way which Heidegger brings to completion, but rather a way by means of which metaphysics goes beyond itself. The necessity of Heidegger's thought grows out of the fact that it must bring into language that which thought, up to now, has left unthought. This thought gains its binding character in that it is concerned with the whole of the Western tradition, which determines us all. The dialogue with Heidegger must gain its rigor from this binding

describes a deeper source than life and meaning, one that not only underpins both terms, but actually *is* their origin and the ground of their relation. Existence and meaning are passively delivered from the deeper, hidden source of *Ereignis*.[52] Although we do not yet know what *Ereignis* is, we know it subtends the relation between existence and meaning – it is the source of their transcendence. Therefore, whatever *Ereignis* is *exactly*, we can suppose that it concerns transcendence, it relates to passivity, and it is a fundamental source of meaning. Let us look more deeply into the phenomenon.

What, then, is *Ereignis*? As it is the case with many Heideggerian terms, *Ereignis* is understood in different ways. Interestingly, the different ways in which *Ereignis* is read corresponds to the different ways the early Heidegger on meaning is read. That is to say, just as there are readings that prioritize human activity in the early Heidgger, and other readings that prioritize passivity, there are also active and passive interpretations of *Ereignis*. Moreover, the basic trends just described reappear when Heidegger's work is treated as a whole. There are some critics who see the early Heidegger as prioritizing activity and the later Heidegger as prioritizing passivity,[53] others who contend that Heidegger is interested in human activity in

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character, from the relationship to the Same." (Otto Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," in *Heidegger & Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, 114-115 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978))

[52] Heidegger describes the ground, concealment and sway of *Ereignis*: "Beyng as the ground in which all beings first come to their truth (sheltering, instituting, objectivity); the ground in which beings are submerged (abyss); the ground in which they also claim to be *indifferent* and *self-evident* (distorted ground). The fact that beyng does essentially occur in this manner of grounding indicates its uniqueness and sovereignty. And that again is merely an intimation toward the event, wherein we have to seek the essential occurrence of being in its greatest concealmetn. Beyng, as what is most worthy of question, does not in itself know any question." (CP 61/BZP 76-77)

[53] For example, in *Through Phenomenology to Thought* William Richardson argues that Heidegger II (the later Heidegger) is a retrieval of the things unthought and unsaid by Heidegger I. In his view, the later Heidegger attempts to investigate what passively withdrew and refused description in his early works.

some form or another throughout his philosophical path,[54] and there are those who read

Heidegger's corpus as an ever-deepening investigation into the fundamental passivity of life.

Still others think Heidegger prioritizes neither activity nor passivity, but argue that Heidegger is

principally concerned with the basic problem of meaning and thereby understand the issues of

activity and passivity as functions of Heidegger's ongoing investigation into the fundamental

question of meaning.[55] Therefore, in order to continue exploring the context and path of our

reading, I will briefly consider a few leading ways of understanding *Ereignis*. My investigation

into different interpretations of *Ereignis* will also require that I consider different paths of

reading the later Heidegger, and by extension, different ways of understanding Heidegger's

corpus. My discussion of *Ereignis* will not only continue the path of investigation into meaning

and reading that I began in the first chapter, but it will also open a new context of discussion,

namely, how I understand Heidegger's work as a whole.

I begin, as I did in the first chapter, with the pragmatist approach to understanding the

later Heidegger and his discussion of *Ereignis*. Pragmatist readings of the early Heidegger tend

to prioritize the human activity of understanding the world, a topic almost entirely absent in the

later works. Nevertheless, some pragmatists argue the later works continue the early Heidegger's

investigation into human activity. The argument continues, rather than focus on the necessary

conditions of the activity of life (as Heidegger does in his early writings) the later works examine

activity from the perspective of human artifacts (such as art and technology) and cultural

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[54] For example, see Hubert Dreyfus's "Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics" (Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon, 289-316 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999)) and Lee Braver's *Heidegger's Later Writings*.

[55] See Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*", 42-68; Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," 84-115.

practices (such as politics and language).[56] In this case, the later Heidegger is understood as

refining his earlier investigation. As one critic, Lee Braver suggests, the early Heidegger asks

'what are the conditions of possibility of living life as it is?' on the one hand, and on the other

hand the later Heidegger asks 'what are the conditions of possibility of the conditions revealed in

the earlier investigation?'.[57] In a more specific example, Braver argues that while the early

Heidegger contends that discourse is an essential condition of existence and that humans are

always involved in the activity of communication, the later Heidegger explores the fact that

humans are always suited to communication and communication is always suited to humans.[58]

The suitability or appropriateness of the relation is, according to Braver, what Heidegger means

by *Ereignis*. Thus, *Ereignis* is one way to describe the lived relation between that which has

meaning (Dasein) and that which gives meaning (world). Although Braver's notion of *Ereignis*

(as I understand it) as a type of practical appropriateness (rather than appropriation)[59] is helpful

in its clarity – that is to say, *Ereignis* can be summarized as the fact that humans and their world

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[56] See Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics," 289-316.

[57] Lee Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings*, 3-4.

[58] As Braver writes: "How is it that language and beings accommodate each other, finding the other fitting or 'well-joined'? Heidegger calls the occurrence of their presencing to each other '*Ereignis*', translated here as 'propriation'. This rich word means 'event', but it also resonates with '*eigen*' which signifies what is one's own, proper, or authentic; the prefix 'er-' adds the sense of drawing something into this condition." (Lee Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings*, 112).

[59] As Braver writes: "How is it that language and beings accommodate each other, finding the other fitting or 'well-joined'? Heidegger calls the occurrence of their presencing to each other '*Ereignis*', translated here as 'propriation'… Propriation is and is only the event of our ability to perceive, think, and speak about beings, their intelligible presence to us. This event cannot be explained by reference to a cause like Forms or God or transcendental subjectivity, since these are just present beings as well, even if they possess unusual forms of presence… , the even of beings and man manifesting themselves to each other must simply be experience and noted in sober awe. Explanations fail and, in the attempt, dissipate the grateful wonder we should have." (Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings*, 112-114).

are appropriate for each other[60] – it does not address the fundamental concealment (*i.e.*, an abyss-like ground of concealment) from which *Ereignis* is said to arise.[61] Braver contends that Heidegger reinterprets *what humans can do* (revealed in his investigation of understanding in the early works) in terms of *that humans can do things* (revealed in the event of appropriation or *Ereignis*).[62] However, the part of the story left untold by Braver's reading is the concealment of *Ereignis* – the hidden ground and meaning of appropriation. Braver's practical-appropriateness model does not engage with the question, why is there appropriateness rather than not? Moreover, the *fact* that humans and their world are *appropriate for* and *appropriated by* each other *rather than not*, the *fact* that there is *appropriation* rather than *nothing*, and even more fundamentally, the *fact* that disclosure arises from the withdrawal of being (that is, concealment *as such*) has yet to be discussed.

Another telling pragmatist approach to the later Heidegger comes from Hubert Dreyfus whose glossy treatment of Heidegger's discussion of art and technology is in keeping with Dreyfus' own 'know-how' model of meaning in the early Heidegger. [63] Reading the later

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[60] Braver contends: "*Ereignis* means both our being drawn into the clearing where we can perceive, think, and talk about beings, and the correlative drawing of beings into the clearing where they can appear to us. We can only speak by listening, and we can only listen if we belong to the realm of speakable things. Our belonging here is complemented or 'well-joined' by Being's owning us." (Lee Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings*, 12-13)

[61] Heidegger writes: "[Restraint] is the grounding, basic disposition because it disposes the fathoming of the ground of Da-sein; i.e., the fathoming of the event, and thereby disposes the grounding of Da-sein." (CP 29/BZP 34-35)

[62] Lee Braver, *Heidegger's Later Writings*, 113-114.

[63] See Hubert Dreyfus's "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics" in which Dreyfus investigates some of the later Heidegger's central interests, and where Dreyfus' pragmatism continues to inform his reading of Heidegger. As a result, his reading highlights the practical value of cultural practices as a way to enter into Heidegger's discussion of art, technology and politics. Dreyfus argues that cultural practices are the normative basis upon which humans know how to do cope with their world and their immediate environment. By extension, art, technology and politics are expressions of cultural practice and disclose cultural practice in different ways. The important point is that cultural

Heidegger, Dreyfus contends that human artifacts such as artworks organize our everyday

practices into meaningful expressions of culture and community.[64] Furthermore, the basic

character of the artwork is that it is a cultural practice that functions to reveal cultural practice.[65]

The explicit disclosure of cultural practice, or cultural know-how, has its own practical import –

it serves to bond community, express cultural moods, and ground the very cultural practice and

understanding that it depicts.[66] Therefore, art has a double-structure of usefulness: it is a useful

cultural practice insofar as it is a meaningful human activity from which humans work out their

possibility and express their self-understanding and cultural know-how, and it is also useful

inasmuch as it *preserves* cultural know-how by reinforcing the value of the cultural know-how

and self-understanding that the artwork expresses.[67]

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practices are necessary for life to be lived, and *must* remain in part hidden for life to continue to be lived. (Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics," 293-294)

[64] Ibid., 297

[65] Ibid., 300

[66] Ibid., 297-298

[67] Even Heidegger's discussion of earth is instrumentalized in Dreyfus's model of art as cultural practice. Dreyfus argues that earth is the material that is not absorbed or used up by cultural know-how (Ibid., 300). In other words, earth is not "passive matter" (300), but rather, a type of resistance against human practices inherent in raw material. Dreyfus argues that artworks express the resistance to the totalization of cultural know-how; in effect, art reveals earth as something that is concealed by our cultural practices. The resistance is important inasmuch as it provides a space for us to understand, question and consider our cultural practices. From Dreyfus's perspective, the disclosure of earth allows us to refocus and renew our cultural practices (300), it allows us to understand and re-think our cultural understanding. In short, the disclosure of earth is useful. Similarly, in "Heidegger's Ontology of Art" (Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Ontology of Art," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall, 407-419 (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007)), Dreyfus describes earth as "the way the artwork and its associated practices resist such explication and totalization" (Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Ontology of Art, 411), as having a "positive function" (412), as "a function of the tendency in the cultural practices themselves to open worlds" (412), and as "not passive matter, but [as coming] into being precisely as what resists any attempt to abstract and generalize the point of the [artwork] paradigm." (412) Remark that Dreyfus's discussion is exemplary of naïve realism; that is, of the idea that there are simple beings that we shape and determine according to our needs and practices. I will explore the (problem with the) idea further in the last section of the present chapter. I will,

Correspondingly, Dreyfus also has an instrumental understanding of *Ereignis*; in effect, Dreyfus understands the clearing of *Ereignis* as the context or history or background of cultural practices, which ground actual cultural practices.[68] In other words, present cultural practices are possible given the specific history of cultural practices from which they arise. For example, our technological way of life is possible *given* a history of ideas that leads us to think of things in terms of efficiency and ends.[69] Therefore, *Ereignis* is the background understanding from which

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however, presently remark the fact that Dreyfus's reading of earth is typically pragmatist and contrary to what earth *is* – the withdrawal of being. Dreyfus accrues function to what is ultimately the withdrawal of the nothing, *i.e.*, that which refuses all functions, a reading that quickly reveals its limitations in his examples.

[68] See Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics," 304-306. Also, in "Heidegger's Ontology of Art", Dreyfus connects his understanding of the work of art to *Ereignis*: "Truth for Heidegger means disclosing. So, for Heidegger, opening a world is a way truth sets itself to work. We can now understand this to mean that a culture's practices tend to gather so as to open and illuminate a world, and they use the artwork to do so. Indeed, in his marginal comments to "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger repeatedly notes that what he is referring to here is what he later calls the event of appropriation (*das Ereignis*). That is, what ultimately makes truth and art possible is the way cultural practices tend toward making sense, the way they gather together to bring things out in their ownmost, to let things and people appear in a rich rather than in a banal way." (Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Ontology of Art," 414) This should be understood against the backdrop of Dreyfus's pragmatist understanding of art, world, being and cultural practices. In the same essay, Dreyfus contends that "an artwork is a thing that, when it works, performs at least one of three ontological functions. It *manifests*, *articulates*, or *reconfigures* the style of a culture from within the world of that culture." (407) Dreyfus's practical view of the artwork stems directly from his view of the world, which he understands as "the whole context of shared equipment, roles, and practices on the basis of which one can encounter entities and other people as intelligible." (407) Moreover, Dreyfus writes that "the truth of being of a particular culture or a specific epoch in our culture [is] the *style* of that world" (407) and style "is the way the everyday practices are coordinated. It serves as the basis upon which old practices are conserved and new practices are developed." (408) To summarize his argument: Art is a cultural practice (insofar as its function is to manifest, articulate, or reconfigure) that preserves cultural practices. Furthermore, the cultural practice of art is used by the event of appropriation, *Ereignis*, to preserve the process (or cultural practice) of sense-making.

[69] In "Heidegger's Ontology of Art," Dreyfus describes what he understands as the cultural differences in mothering as an example of *style*, which Dreyfus defines as the particular way a culture organizes and understands its everyday practices (Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Ontology of Art," 408), an understanding that "has a history" (407) of practice. Dreyfus contends that American mothers "tend to put babies in their cribs on their stomachs, which encourages babies to move around more effectively" (408), that is, "American mothers situate the infant's body and respond to the infant's actions in such a way as to promote an active and aggressive style of behavior." (408) On the other hand, Dreyfus argues that Japanese mothers "put their babies on their backs so they will lie still, lulled by whatever they see" (408), which promotes "a greater passivity and sensitivity to harmony in the actions of their babies." (408) Furthermore, Dreyfus continues, the particularity of the mothering style (in part) gives rise to a general cultural style. For example, Dreyfus contends that a baby rattle is for an American baby "an object to make lots of

humans can understand the world in meaningful ways.[70] Another way to put it is Dreyfus

understands *Ereignis* as the condition of possibility of meaning in the early Heidegger (where

'meaning' is understood in terms of Dreyfus's own know-how model). One consequence of his

reading is that cultural practices have no ground beyond themselves; a cultural practice is given

from a cultural context, which itself arises from the traditions within which the culture is

embedded.[71] In short, the context of practice and understanding *is* (a history and tradition of)

practice and understanding. The fact that there *are* contexts, argues Dreyfus, and that contexts

are discrete from other contexts proves that all cultural practices have their own ground and

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expressive noise with and to throw on the floor in a willful way in order to get a parent to pick it up" while a
Japanese baby would only "treat a rattle-thing this way more or less by accident." (408) Rattles for Japanese babies
serve "a soothing, pacifying function." (408) Pushing his point even further, Dreyfus contends that what "constitutes
the American baby as an *American* baby is its style, and what constitutes the Japanese baby as a *Japanese* baby is its
quite different style" and the "adults in each culture are completely shaped by it." (408) Dreyfus concludes, "it
should come as no surprise, given the caricature I have just presented of Japanese and American culture, that
Japanese adults seek contented, social integration, while American adults are still striving willfully to satisfy their
individual desires." (408) I assume that Dreyfus describes his example as a caricature because he is aware of its
reductiveness, but his idea nevertheless appears to be the following – there is a type of determinism to practice, one
preserved by history and the handing down of shared cultural practices, and one that ultimately defines being (*e.g.*,
what makes an American baby an *American* baby is its style). According to Dreyfus, the sharing and handing down
of practices is the meaning of being. A few questions must be asked of Dreyfus's cultural-practice model as it is
represented here in the example: Rather than difference, what is similar about the mothering styles, and what might
be interesting or telling about these similarities? Are these similarities, across cultures and epochs, potentially
revealing of a deeper, transcendental condition that is hidden by everyday practices? What is concealed in the
polarity by which Dreyfus describes the difference between American and Japanese mothering styles? Why is there
a history of styles and mothers and culture *at all*? Indeed, Dreyfus misses the fundamental point: mothers, babies,
cultures, and being are not only meaningful in their appearances (an assumption that pragmatism cannot think
beyond), but also and more fundamentally, in the ways they do not appear, in what they can and cannot be.

[70] Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics," 296.

[71] Notably, Dreyfus's remark concerning the possibility of freeing ourselves of the technological way of life is
telling. The implicit detachment he describes betrays his pragmatist view of historical situatedness, which he limits
to an ontic understanding of cultural practices. He contends, "once one recognizes the technological understanding
of being for what it is – a historical understanding – one gains a free relation to it. We neither push forward
technological efficiency as our sole goal nor always resist it. If we are free of the technological imperative we can,
in each case, discuss the pros and cons." (Ibid., 308) Dreyfus's interpretation does not quite capture the thrownness
of culture and the impossibility of detaching ourselves from thrownness – a feature of life never entirely in view.

history within themselves. What really matters phenomenologically speaking, then, is the ontic or regional condition of cultural know-how. According to Dreyfus, cultural know-how does the heavy work in determining and revealing human activity, a fact he believes is disclosed in cultural misunderstanding.

Cultural misunderstanding reveals the practicality of cultural know-how (*i.e.,* without it, we have cultural breakdown) and shows us that at every level of meaningful interaction, humans are informed by their particular know-how, an activity primordially given in their cultural know-how, which itself is determined by a history of cultural understanding. His examples here are thin.[72] The point concerning cultural misunderstanding is the most telling part of Dreyfus's argument; as he describes cultural misunderstanding, the pragmatism from which he interprets the phenomenon limits his perspective – he can only interpret the fact that cultural misunderstanding reveals the basic pervasiveness of understanding (and not the deeper point that

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[72] Dreyfus describes the difference in standing distance as an example of cultural practices. "The cultural know-how that embodies our concerns is certainly not conscious, but neither does it appear to be unconscious. To get a sense of what this know-how is like, let us take a very simple case. People in various cultures stand different distances from an intimate, a friend, a stranger. Furthermore, the distances vary when these people are chatting, doing business, or engaging in courtship. Each culture, including our own, embodies an incredibly subtle shared pattern of social distancing. Yet no one explicitly taught this pattern to each of us. Our parents could not possibly have consciously instructed us in it since they do not know the pattern any more than we do. We do not even know we have such know-how until we go to another culture and find, for example, that in North Africa strangers seem to be oppressively close while in Scandinavia friends seem to stand too far away. This makes us uneasy, and we cannot help backing away or moving close. It is through such responses that we got this know-how in the first place." (Ibid., 294) He also describes Japanese ideas of human beings versus American notions of human beings. "Note that an aspect of the Japanese understanding of what it is to be human (passive, contented, gentle, social, etc.) fits with an understanding of what it is to be a thing (evocative of simpler times, pure, natural, simple, beautiful, traditional, etc.). It would make no sense for us, who are active, independent, and aggressive – constantly striving to cultivate and satisfy our desires – to relate to things the way the Japanese do; or for the Japanese (before their understanding of being was interfered with by ours) to invent and prefer Styrofoam teacups. In the same vein *we* tend to think of politics as the negotiation of individual desires, while the Japanese seek consensus. In sum, the practices containing an understanding of what it is to be a human being, those containinig an interpretation of what it is to be a thing, and those defining society fit together. Social practices thus transmit not only an implicit understanding of what it is to be a human being, an animal, or an object, but, finally, an understanding of what it is for anything to be at all." (295)

misunderstanding reveals our basic thrownness into culture). That is to say, Dreyfus's remark that some cultures stand too close to each other while other cultures stand too far apart reveals his blindness to his own cultural and historical situatedness; Dreyfus is unable to see that his notions of closeness and farness are *relative to* his own understanding of *appropriate standing-distance*, a distance he understands *as* appropriate given the fact that his ideas about standing-distance have been handed down to him through (the contingency of) his historical context. He misses the deeper point concerning cultural misunderstanding.

The deeper point concealed by Dreyfus's interpretation is that all cultures have cultural practices, that these practices are not chosen, and that our delivery into cultural practices do not so much reveal understanding and activity, but rather they show us the fundamental affectivity and passivity from which activity appears. The distance of how far apart we stand from each other is beside the point – although it is true that the significance of 'standing-distance' varies from culture to culture, the most revealing part of his example is that all humans understand 'standing-distance' as a form of cultural expression, a fact we do not choose ourselves. The crucial point is that the *way* humans stand is deployed or appropriated by and preserves cultural practice and not the other way round (*i.e.,* we do not deploy cultural practices; our practices do not preserve us). The deeper level of deployment cannot be discussed in terms of usefulness or practice; in effect, thrownness, passivity, or fundamental concealment is neither useful nor a practice; as one critic puts it, it "is not something positive," it *is* "rather refusal… being refuses: that is its essence and its essential sway."[73] In point of fact, Dreyfus' treatment of the later Heidegger is a Procrustean continuation of his know-model of the meaning of 'meaning' and

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[73] Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 34.

glosses the deeper point of *Ereignis* – to put the fundamental point in Dreyfus' terms, life is not a human practice, but rather humans are a practice of life. Although both Braver and Dreyfus help clarify a way to read Heidegger's extensive work, the fact that they interpret Heidegger's path as a continuous investigation into (what they understand *as*) a *basic characteristic of life* limits the reading to that character. To put it crudely, pragmatism cannot see beyond the practical. Therefore, although helpful in the tidiness and clarity with which they treat the difficult texts, pragmatist readings of Heidegger's corpus conceal a deeper understanding of the path of Heidegger's thought – one that does not show itself to practical thought – and, consequently, reduces *Ereignis* to a function of pragmatism.

Section 2.2: What do non-pragmatists say about *Ereignis*?

Another way to approach the later Heidegger is to read him as part of a progression of ideas initiated in his early works. As one critic, Thomas Sheehan, argues, both the early and the later Heidegger are concerned with the same problem: the problem of meaning.[74] Sheehan contends that while the early Heidegger reveals *facticity* (or the fact that humans are always

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[74] Sheehan argues that reading Heidegger's project as primarily concerned with the problem of meaning frees Heidegger's texts from a few common and persistent misconceptions. As Sheehan explains: "First, being is always the being *of beings*, whereas Heidegger insisted that the being of beings was not the central issue of his thinking. (Metaphysics had already covered that ground.) Instead, prescinding from its function of grounding beings, Heidegger asks how being itself occurs at all. This question can be expressed in various ways, for example: What is the *Wesen* or *Wahrheit* or *Ursprung* of *Sein*? (i.e., the source of the disclosure of being to understanding), or simply "*Wie west das Sein?*" – "How does the being-process occur?" In some of Heidegger's later works, the various titles for naming that source tend to cluster around the key term *Ereignis*. The second reason why "being" is not Heidegger's core topic is that once one has taken the phenomenological turn, the only philosophical issues that remain are questions of meaning. To gloss Gadamer's *bon mot*: Being that can be understood is meaning. Our ability to deal with anything we encounter, our capacity to make sense of it, entails that the thing must have already entered the realm of language – that is, the realm of meaning. And meaning, of course, occurs only in correlation with human understanding. This correlation is itself the disclosure of meaning to understanding." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*, 43-44)

involved in a meaningful world) as the *ground of Dasein* (or the basic character of that which has meaning), the later Heidegger discloses *Ereignis* as the relation between that which *has meaning* (*i.e.,* Dasein) and that which *gives meaning* (*i.e.,* facticity).[75] *Ereignis* is the (temporal) relation between humans and the meaningful world – a concern of the early Heidegger – thought of in terms of the (historical) fact that there is meaning rather than not – a main topic in the later Heidegger.[76] In other words, Sheehan argues the early Heidegger investigates the fundamental nature of temporality (and reveals that historicality [*Geschichtlichkeit*] is a function of temporality), and the later Heidegger examines the fundamental nature of historicality (which discloses that temporality is a function of historicity).[77] Therefore, while the early Heidegger prioritizes how meaning occurs in time, and the later Heidegger emphasizes how meaning occurs in and is deployed by history, both early and later Heidegger are concerned with meaning and

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[75] Sheehan writes: "The meaning-process begins with the obvious fact that, from one's first encounter with things, they make sense. They are immediately imbued with meaningfulness – which is to say they are always already caught up in the ontological difference between meaning-giving and the meaningful." (Ibid., 54)

[76] Sheehan discusses *Ereignis*: "Heidegger refuses the usual, non-technical translation of *Ereignis* as "event" and interprets it instead as *the appropriation of man to the meaning-giving process*. But this appropriation of human being to meaning-giving is an a priori and therefore inescapable state of affairs for human being. Man is, of and by its nature, *thrown* into meaning. In the language of Heidegger I, man is *In-der-Welt-sein*, a thrown-projective engagement-with-meaning. In that sense, the appropriation of man for meaning in Heidegger II is the same as the thrownness of man into meaning in Heidegger I." (Ibid., 53) Sheehan continues his discussion: "The *preparatory* question is "how and why are things meaningful?" and the answer is *world* in Heidegger's sense of the term: the meaning-giving context that exists only in correlation with human being. On the other hand, the *basic* question is: "How is there meaning at all?" and the answer is: man's thrown appropriation to the meaning-giving process." (53-54)

[77] In the following passage from "Time and Being", Heidegger describes what is concealed by the disclosure of temporality: "Time *is* not. There is, It gives time. The giving that gives time is determined by denying and withholding nearness. It grants the openness of time-space and preserves what remains denied in what has-been, what is withheld in approach. We call the giving which gives true time an extending which opens and conceals. As extending it itself a giving, the giving of a giving is concealed in true time." (TB 16)

how its occurrence is established by something beyond itself. In short, Heidegger has one basic

interest – to investigate the transcendence of meaning.[78]

Similarly, Otto Pöggeler interprets Heidegger's philosophical path as an ongoing project,

which has one persistent goal: the disclosure of the meaning of being [*Sinn von Sein*].[79] The

project, Pöggeler explains, requires an investigation into the hidden parts of being, which are not

only hidden by the busyness of average everyday life, but further concealed by the history of

thought. The difficulty for Heidegger is therefore in freeing being from the concealment of

metaphysics and creating a new way of thinking the most fundamental questions.[80] In his words,

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[78] Sheehan continues his argument for the priority of meaning: "The several arguments I have provided in this first section justify the thesis that in Heidegger's work "being" should be understood as "meaning." But doing only this much is merely to have taken the first step in the two-step process of arriving at the answer to Heidegger's fundamental question. This first step – reading being as meaning – moves us from the traditional framework of metaphysics to a specifically hermeneutical-phenomenological perspective. It marks the transformation of the question of the being of beings into the question of the meaning of the meaningful. It is a crucial step to be sure, one that, unfortunately, is almost never thematized in Heidegger scholarship. Without it, one risks slipping back in the incoherent tendency to think of "being" as objectively out there, either within things, or behind them, or above them – and ultimately as some kid of Super-Subject endowed with agency, as in onto-theology… The truly important step is the next one: getting to the *constituting source* of meaning as such. This is "the leap" into a truly new and fundamental question, heretofore unasked in philosophy or phenomenology: If meaning-giving (*Welt*, *Lichtung*) is responsible for things being meaningful, what is responsible for *Welt* and *Lichtung* as such? Without appealing to a creative deity, a transcendental ego, or to some crude notion of causality, what lets meaning come about at all? If we accept that ther ealm of clarity (*Lichtung*) is the open region of understanding (*das Offene des Begreifens*) – i.e., that it is the disclosure of meaning to human being (*die Wahrheit des Seins*) – then the question becomes: "Granted that the region of enworlding clarity is always already given, whence and how is it given?"" (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*, 51)

[79] As Pöggeler writes of Heidegger's path: "The question of the meaning of Being brings that which metaphysics leaves unthought and ungrounded, i.e., the abysslike ground of metaphysics, to expression. An excurses through the history of metaphyscis (which the second portion of *Being and Time* was supposed to have attempted) must reveal the abysslike ground so that thought, by means of its own questioning, may return into it. Heidegger now considers above all the beginning, the completion, and the end of metaphysical thought." (Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," 97)

[80] Pöggeler describes the happening of truth in the following way: "Through the return to the ground of metaphysics, that which has been thought by metaphysics is posed anew as something which must be decided upon and, in this manner, can be primordially adopted. By means of a meditation which is focused on Being's history, Heidegger reflects upon the characterizations of the meaning of Being which, although prevailing in various phases of

Pöggeler writes that the "working out of the question of Being is the attempt to inquire into the meaning of Being as such, whose characterization remains simply an unthought presupposition of metaphysics."[81] Pöggeler argues that the search for the other beginning of the history of metaphysics expressed in the later Heidegger is traceable in the early Heidegger.[82] The existential analytic of Dasein *and* the destruction of the history of ontology *comprise* the twofold task set out in *Being and Time*,[83] moreover, the existential analytic of Dasein is *part* of the path of the destruction of the history of ontology.[84] Therefore, the investigation into the conditions of possibility of life is intended to free life from the history of metaphysics such that life can appear and be described *as it is.*

In the same vein as his reading of Heidegger's corpus, Pöggeler interprets *Ereignis* as a continuation of the path of investigation initiated in *Being and Time*. In effect, Pöggeler argues

metaphysics, were not expressly put into question there. Thus, Heidegger seeks to place metaphysical thinking back upon that ground which itself has remained unthought, to incorporate his own thinking into that "happening" of truth as it comes to us from our tradition." (Ibid., 102-103)

[81] Ibid., 95.

[82] Pöggeler describes the transcendence of being: "*Being and Time* begins with an exposition of the question of the meaning of Being; indications are constantly given that the analytic of Dasein is on the way to a determination of the meaning of Being, and actually already presupposes a conception of this meaning and therefore is caught up in a circle. The completion of the "reversal" is not turning to a new position, but rather a return to the original point of departure and a return to that ground upon which this circle-of-thought has rested from the very beginning. This ground is, of course, not only the basis of Heidegger's own thinking, but also that which was left unthought by metaphysics." (Ibid., 96)

[83] See BT, Introduction II.

[84] "*Being and Time* begins with an exposition of the question of the meaning of Being; indications are constantly given that the analytic of Dasein is on the way to a determination of the meaning of Being, and actually already presupposes a conception of this meaning and therefore is caught up in a circle. The completion of the "reversal" is not turning to a new position, but rather a return to the original point of departure and a return to that ground upon which this circle-of-thought has rested from the very beginning. This ground is, of course, not only the basis of Heidegger's own thinking, but also that which was left unthought by metaphysics" (Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," 96).

that the question of the meaning of being is recast as the question of why there is being instead of nothing,[85] a question which brings Heidegger's path of thought into contact with the happening of truth (or the fact that truth is an event that happens, rather than not). The question opens the possibility of a discussion of *Ereignis*. Pöggeler contends that *Ereignis* is "the concurrence of concealment and nonconcealment."[86] *Ereignis* opens a space for possibility to appear by concealing possibilities while revealing others. More specifically, thinking the meaning of being as *Ereignis* opens the possibility of thinking what is yet unthought by metaphysics.[87] Therefore, the search for the other beginning begins in the Dasein analytic and progresses towards *Ereignis* and the idea that life is granted from the appropriation of history. Another way to put it is: Dasein is the discovering of the granting. Or more simply, life is the discovering of itself always historically situated. Thus, *Ereignis* is the possibility of the discovering.

Looking at Heidegger's corpus as a whole, Pöggeler argues that the individual subject of the early Heidegger's writings is rethought in the later Heidegger and shown to be an expression

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[85] Pöggeler explains the fundamental question of metaphysics: "It is a characteristic of metaphysics that it presupposes an ontic foundation for ontology, and lets the meaning of Being be determined from the perspective of a particular being. In contrast to this, Heidegger cuts off the path to a highest being, which is no longer questioned in its Being, with the question: "Why is there anything at all, and not simply Nothing?". In this way, thought enters into the happening of truth, in which the meaning of Being itself becomes revealed." (Ibid., 106)

[86] Ibid., 106

[87] Pöggeler describes the path of thinking the unthought of being: "That which was left unthought by metaphysics, not merely the Being of beings, but the meaning of Being itself, comes to be thought. In this way, metaphysics comes to its "ground." What the word "ground" may mean here is explained by Heidegger where he rethinks the fundamental concepts of metaphysics: identity, difference, and ground. Heidegger does not simply ask what identity, difference, and ground have to say about beings, but asks rather, how they belong to Being itself, Being as the event of appropriation." (Ibid., 106)

of a deeper process.[88] In the later Heidegger we discover that individual humans are instances of existence appearing from the complex history of events and ideas, to which all instances of existence owe their meaning. The deeper type of history, the *ground* of history – or as Heidegger calls it, historicality – is the movement of historical being into which all instances of being find themselves and from which all individuals understand themselves and their possibility.[89] Existence appears as it is only because history works itself out and discovers itself through existence. The deliverance of existence to the sway and movement of the ground of history is part of the basic passivity of being.[90]

Put more simply, we cannot choose our histories any more than we can choose *that* there *is* history. We can, suggests Heidegger, relate to history in different ways,[91] and of course we are the reason history first appears and is understood *as* history, but the *fact* that history works itself out through us – the instances of life deployed by its sway – is not something we choose. We are appropriated by history, and from our passive appropriation, we live the meaning process – we are *given to* meaning, we are *granted* meaning, or as Sheehan writes, we are "*the appropriation*

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[88] Pöggeler writes: "Being as the event of appropriation gives beings into openness, and allows them to reveal themselves as the Being "of" beings." (Ibid., 107)

[89] As Pöggeler puts it: "Being as nondeterminable, historical destining of Being which is not simply at our disposal grants at any given time the clearing in which being become manifest. It thus makes possible the "bursting open" of the world as a historical world (history to be taken here in the sense in which it is not limited only to man)." (Ibid., 107-108)

[90] Pöggeler describes the necessary passivity in the task of thinking being: "The form is not an empty shell, but rather always ready to make the leap to the concrete through a content. This fulfillment is held back, however, because it is irreducibly factical. That for which resolute Dasein resolves itself, "which" reveals itself in Being as the event of appropriation, remains open, since thought can neither posit it nor derive it without destroying the character of the event of appropriation." (Ibid., 110)

[91] See BT, Div. II, Ch. 5 especially BT 429-449/SZ 378-397.

of man to the meaning-giving process."[92] Moreover, humans preserve the movement of life (or

the meaning-process or the historical-meaning-process) and are swept up in the power of that

movement.[93] In other words, humans do not make life happen, they do not determine what or

how things matter, and they do not make history – although they participate in the process just

described, the fact is that all this *happens* to humans.[94] In this way, *Ereignis* can be described as

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[92] In his essay "What, after all, was Heidegger about?" (Thomas Sheehan, "What, after all, was Heidegger about?," *Continental Philosophy Review* 3-4, vol. 47 (2014): 249-274), Thomas Sheehan translates *Ereignis* as *the appropriation of existence to sustaining the clearing* (page). Similarly, in "Facticity and *Ereignis*" Sheehan describes *Ereignis* as *the appropriation of man to the meaning-giving process* (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 53). While wordy, Sheehan's translations are interesting because they show the essential feature of meaning, specifically, that it is a *movement* and a *process* –terms that imply hiddenness and concealment. In other words, Sheehan's translation of *Ereignis* bears within it the enigmatic character of meaning and therefore opens the possibility for a discussion concerning being and non-being, positive possibility and negative possibility. Keeping these facets in mind, Sheehan investigates the meaning of *Ereignis* as a way to understand meaning. Sheehan describes the relation between activity and passivity and the connection that can be found between later Heidegger's discussion of the passive deliverance into appropriation and the early Heidegger's description of thrown projection. "Heidegger refuses the usual, non-technical translation of *Ereignis* as "event" and interprets it instead as *the appropriation of man to the meaning-giving process*. But this appropriation of human being to meaning-giving is an a priori and therefore inescapable state of affairs for human being. Man is, of and by its nature, *thrown* into meaning. In the language of Heidegger I, man is *In-der-Welt-sein*, a thrown-projective engagement-with-meaning. In that sense, the appropriation of man for meaning in Heidegger II is the same as the thrownness of man into meaning in Heidegger I. The equivalence of thrownness of man appropriation is stated frequently and clearly in Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy* – e.g. "*das Dasein ist geworfen, ereignet*" and similar texts. Likewise the projective sustaining of meaning (*Entwurf*) in Heidegger I is the same as the belonging-to or holding-open or meaning in Heidegger II (*Zugehorigkeit*, *Offenhalten*). The outcome of thrownness/appropriation is the togetherness or bond (*Zusammengehorigkeit*) of man and meaning, the state of affairs that is itself meaning-giving." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*, 53) Nevertheless, as remarked in a previous note, while Sheehan captures the basic feature of transcendence in the meaning of 'meaning', the hidden part of meaning is difficult for him to disclose. One of the reasons is that he chooses to approach the question of the meaning of being from the perspective of meaning and therefore tends to describe what is disclosed rather than what is concealed in the unconcealment of meaning. For a deeper investigation, the question of the meaning of 'meaning' must be asked from the perspective of meaninglessness, or from that which does not have meaning.

[93] As Copobianco describes, however, *Ereignis* is not a traumatic event, "but rather now as the 'most gentle of laws' that allows the gathering of each being into what it properly is and into a belonging with other beings" (Copobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 44).

[94] Macdonald describes the happening in the following way: "This 'happening' that makes that which merely happens possible just what Heidegger calls the event (*Ereignis*), of which Dasein is the site but not the origin. Thus, when Heidegger writes of the event of being, he is calling attention to the fact that happenings of whatever sort are not exhausted by the activity of a pure I, or by the apparently positive presence of beings and co-given potentialities,

a 'happening'. Furthermore, it can be said that the process of history and meaning does not only *happen* to humans, it uses or deploys or *appropriates* humans – we preserve the process or the eventuality of the process through our appropriation.[95] Thus, another way to describe *Ereignis* is as an 'appropriation' or as the 'event of appropriation'.[96] As Heidegger writes:

> "In the sending of the destiny of Being, in the extending of time, there becomes manifest a dedication, a delivering over into what is their own, namely of Being as presence and of time as the realm of the open. What determines both, time and Being, in their own, that is, in their belonging together, we shall call: *Ereignis*, the event of Appropriation. *Ereignis* will be translated as Appropriation or event of Appropriation. One should bear in mind, however, that "event" is not simply an occurrence, but that which makes any occurrence possible. What this word names can be thought now only in the light of what becomes manifest in our looking ahead toward Being and toward time as destiny and as extending, to which time and Being belong. We have called both – Being and time – "matters." The "and" between them left their relation to each other indeterminate. We now see: What lets the two matters belong together, what brings the two into their own and, even more, maintains and holds them in their belonging together – the way the two matters and, the matter at stake – is Appropriation. The matter at stake is not a relation retroactively superimposed on Being and time. The matter at stake first appropriates Being and time into their own in virtue of their relation, and does so by the appropriating that is concealed in destiny and in the gift of

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but in an ultimate sense are rather made possible by what is *not* given in the apparent presence of a being." (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 39)

[95] Joan Stambaugh, for example, uses 'appropriation' to represent Heidegger's later discussion of being in "Time and Being" and "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking".

[96] For example, in "Being as Appropriation" Pöggeler argues that being is an event of appropriation.

opening out. Accordingly, the It that gives in "It gives Being," "It gives time," proves to be Appropriation."[97]

Indeed, Sheehan and Pöggeler make the similar following point: *Ereignis* is ultimately a historically situated term. Thinking of meaning as a historically situated happening opens the possibility of thinking the ground of history *as such* for the first time. The happening of appropriation allows the fact that humans are always historically situated to be thought in terms of historicality for the first time.[98] The main difference between Sheehan and Pöggeler's historically-situated model of *Ereignis* and the pragmatist models we discussed (*i.e.,*Braver's practical-appropriateness model and Dreyfus' cultural-practice model) is that the historically-situated model prioritizes the hiddenness or concealment implied by the happening of truth.[99] While critics such as Braver and Dreyfus understand *Ereignis* as an expression of cultural practice (worked out in language, art, technology and politics), the historically-situated model understands cultural practices as arising from a deeper, historically situated ground of possibility – a ground that constantly recedes such that life as it is can appear.[100]

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[97] TB 19

[98] Pöggeler, "Being as appropriation," 107-108.

[99] For a discussion of the way the historically-situated receding ground shapes "the shared sense of intelligibility" defining each epoch *as* an epoch, see Iain Thomson's essay "Ontotheology" (Iain Thomson, "Ontotheology," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dalstrom, 106-131 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011)). In a sense, Thomson offers a response to Dreyfus' pragmatic claim that cultural practices prove the primacy of understanding and know-how in human activity.

[100] As Susan M. Schoenbohm writes in her helpful guide to reading Heidegger's *Contributions*, "Reading Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy*" (Susan M. Schoenbohm, "Reading Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy*," in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, ed. Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm, Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega, 15-31 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)): "The dimension of be-ing that is its *question*, then, remains distinct, although not spearate from, whatever determinations of be-ing, whatever meanings, arise through it. This dimension of question, we will see, is linked with be-ing's "not-character," that is, with be-ing's not-being *a* being, with be-ing's difference from any determinate

Sheehan and Pöggeler are also alike in their readings of Heidegger's corpus insofar as both critics respectively interpret a path of thinking that grapples with one basic problem: meaning (Sheehan) and being (Pöggeler). Their readings are therefore not only helpful for the context within which they situate Heidegger's path of thought, but more importantly, because they understand Heidegger's path as a continuous investigation into *a basic problem*, Sheehan and Pöggeler situate Heidegger in a larger and more fundamental context than the regional contexts of the pragmatist interpretations (that read Heidegger's path as concerned with the basic character of understanding or practice).[101] In effect – and this is the point that clearly and crucially sets Sheehan and Pöggeler apart from the pragmatist critics discussed – their reading discloses Heidegger's path as *itself* appropriated by the sway of history.[102]

And yet, a part of the story remains untold. Sheehan, for example, describes the passivity of life as it is appropriated by the meaning process, but the deeper space of the concealment of

being. In be-ing as eventuation (en-owning, *Er-eignis*) the occurrence of this question-dimension of be-ing occurs, we might say provisionally, as the withdrawal-dimension of be-ing from beings, as be-ing's withdrawal from beings, as byss (*Ab-grund*)." (Schoenbohm, "Reading Heidegger's *Contributions*," 18).

[101] For an insightful analysis of the context(s) of Heidegger's *Contributions*, and an interesting investigation into the importance of context in general, see: Dennis J. Schmidt, "Strategies for a Possible Reading," in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, ed. Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm, Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega, 32-47 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)).

[102] Notice the way both Sheehan and Pöggeler conclude their essays with a remark on the necessity of properly contextualizing the meaning of being. Sheehan writes: "Both *Ereignis* and *Faktizität* bespeak the same thing: the "fate" of human being as necessary for maintaining (holding open) the meaning-giving process." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 68), and as Pöggeler concludes: "Heidegger himself does not think that which metaphysics has left unthought exclusively in terms of the event of appropriation, but also attempts, by means of his ontological-historical reflections, to raise anew the question concerning those particular articulations of the meaning of Being which dominated certain phases of metaphysics, even though they were not explicitly thought through in themselves. The understanding of Being as Idea, *energeia*, objectivity, will to power, etc., must be thought through on the basis of what was not thought in it, *i.e.,* time as the horizon of the understanding of Being. In this manner, thought, as it has been understood up until now, is to be placed back onto its own ground." (Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation, 114)

the clearing is not described. Likewise, Pöggeler discusses the underlying refusal or withdrawal

or concealment of being, and argues that the unmasterability of concealment is the ground of

being, yet he too does not press into the question of what is the unmastered concealment. In

short, even Pöggeler does not concretely engage with concealment *as such*. Certainly, he

examines the implications of entering into the thought of *Ereignis*, and discusses the

nondeterminability of being given that it is always historically situated and therefore always

passively delivered; Pöggeler contends, it is always an "abysslike ground" (Pöggeler 107).

However, Pöggeler, like Sheehan, does not try to think the unthought (*i.e.,* what is seemingly

unthinkable). Neither Pöggeler nor Sheehan attempt to describe what is concealed in its

concealment. Of course, the difficulty is clear – can concealment *as such* be revealed? It seems

the question cannot be definitively answered. This does not mean, however, that we should not

try to reveal concealment (after all, failure to disclose truth does not imply that truth is

undisclosable). Arguably, the task of philosophy is to think the unthought, to reveal the

concealed.[103] To truly enter into Heidegger's path of thought, to read Heidegger from the

perspective of the basic transcendence of being and to understand what is both similar and

different between the early and later Heidegger, we must engage with concealment *as such*, or as

Heidegger might say, we must surrender to the concealed.[104]

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[103] Heidegger discusses truth in "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking": "We think *aletheia*, unconcealment, as the opening which first grants Being and thinking and their presencing to and for each other. The quiet heart of the opening is the place of stillness from which alone the possibility of the belonging together of Being and thinking, that is, presence and perceiving, can arise at all." (EP 68) A little further along, Heidegger writes: "Unconcealment is, so to speak, the element in which Being and thinking and their belonging together exist."(EP 69)

[104] Heidegger writes at the end of "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking": "Does the name for the task of thinking then read instead of *being and Time*: Opening and Presence? But where does the opening come from and

Section 2.3: The clearing as opening to a discussion of the 'not'

As a way into the discussion of concealment *as such*, I will examine another term related to *Ereignis*, namely, the clearing [*Lichtung*]. Heidegger himself expresses the importance of the clearing;[105] it is, arguably, one way to understand what *Ereignis does*. Therefore, I will presently investigate the clearing and examine how the discussion of the term develops from the earlier works to the later works, the possible implications of its development, and how it is related to and bears on our understanding of *Ereignis*. In *Being and Time* 'the clearing' is described by Macquarrie and Robinson as indicating a 'clearing' in the woods. The translators underline the "force" of the passage "in the fact that these words are cognates of the noun 'Licht' ('light')."[106]In this case, the clearing can be understood as a lightening of a load such that the load becomes manageable. Furthermore, Macquarrie and Robinson highlight the aspect of natural light that can be interpreted in *Lichtung*, a feature reinforced by Heidegger's mention of the '*lumen naturale*' of man.[107] The idea of natural light can be interpreted as a way of making sense of an imperceptible field, or a brightening of a field such that the field first appears. If we

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how is it given? What speaks in the "It gives"? The task of thinking would then be the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking." (EP 73)

[105] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes: "When we talk in an ontically figurative way of the *lumen naturale* in man, we have in mind nothing other than the existential-ontological structure of this entity, that it *is* in such a way as to be its "there". To say that it is 'illuminated' [erleuchtet"] means that *as* Being-in-the-world it is cleared [gelichtet] in itself, not through any other entity, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing. Only for an entity which is existentially cleared in this way does that which is present-at-hand become accessible in the light or hidden in the dark." (BT 171/SZ 133)

[106] Ibid.

[107] Heidegger writes in a few places (including a passage quoted below), however, that *Lichtung* does not imply an illumination as Macquarrie and Robinson imply. Although their interpretation of *Lichtung* as the clearing is helpful, Macquarrie and Robinson were mistaken to read illumination into Heidegger's notion of the clearing.

consider the different facets of the clearing, we can begin to make sense of the early Heidegger's

claim that Dasein *is* the clearing.[108] The clearing in the forest proves to be a helpful metaphor –

when we are in the middle of a very dense forest, the forest cannot appear. From the clearing in

the woods, the forest is rendered perceptible, and the impenetrable bush is lightened such that the

forest trees can first appear *as* a forest. The clearing in the woods makes the appearance of the

woods possible. Therefore, Dasein is the site in which the world is lit, from which the

imperceptible is rendered perceptible, and from which the clearing is itself made possible.[109]

Dasein does not just discover the world, but *clears* the world – it *is* the clearing, it *is* the

discovering.[110] Notably, the early discussion of the clearing focusses on how it is disclosed by

Dasein or in other words, how life reveals or *clears* the meaningful world.

In the later Heidegger, the discussion of the clearing shifts slightly and assumes a more

central role. For example, in "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" Heidegger

reprises the term *'Lichtung'* and, in a more explicit discussion of the meaning of the term,[111]

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[108] Ibid.

[109] In a footnote, Macquarrie and Robinson write: "'Lichtung'. This word is customarily used to stand for a 'clearing' in the woods, not for a 'clarification'; the verb 'lichten' is similarly used. The force of this passage lies in the fact that these words are cognates of the noun 'Light' ('light')" (BT 171/SZ 133)

[110] Heidegger writes: "By its very nature, Dasein brings "there" along with it. If it lacks its "there', it is not factically the entity which is essentially Dasein; indeed, it is not this entity at all. *Dasein is its disclosedness*." (BT 171/SZ 133).

[111] In Heidegger's words: "We call this openness which grants a possible letting-appear and show "opening." In the history of language, the German word "opening" is a borrowed translation of the French *clarière*. It is formed in accordance with the older words *Waldung* (foresting) and *Feldung* (fielding). The forest clearing (opening) is experienced in contrast to dense forest, called "density" (*Dickung*) in older language. The substantive "opening" goes back to the verb "to open." The adjective *licht* "open" is the same word as "light." To open something means: To make something light, free and open, e.g., to make the forest free of tress at one place. The openness thus originating is the clearing. What is light in the sense of being free and open has nothing in common with the adjective "light," meaning "bright" – neither linguistically nor factually. This is to be observed for the difference between openness and light. Still, it is possible that a factual relation between the two exists. Light can stream into

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contends that 'opening' can be understood as a type of 'clearing', which itself should be

understood as a 'de-densification', or a 'making lighter' [cf. *leicht*] such that things can appear.

In a footnote on the term, Joan Stambaugh, the translator of "The End of Philosophy and the

Task of Thinking", focusses attention on the aspects of 'alleviation' and 'the lightening of a

burden'.[112] Furthermore, in *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, Heidegger describes the

clearing as a play between the two constitutive features of existence – that which appears and

that which hides, or the play between revealing and concealing wherein what is revealed is

contingent on what is concealed.[113] As one critic argues, the clearing *is* the meaning process.[114]

And in the words of another commentator, the clearing is the 'there' of being, or the fact that

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the clearing, into its openness, and let brightness play with darkness in it. But light never first creates openness. Rather, light presupposes openness. However, the clearing, the opening, is not only free for brightness and darkness, but also for resonance and echo, for sounding and diminishing of sound. The clearing is the open for everything that is present and absent." (EP 65)

[112] In a footnote, Joan Stambaugh writes: "Both meanings exist in English for light. The meaning Heidegger intends is related to lever (i.e., alleviate, lighten a burden.) (Heidegger, "The end of philosophy," 65) . Heidegger furthermore repeats the image of the *lumen naturale*; this time, however, he specifies the term as the light of reason and thereby deepens his discussion of the clearing: "But philosophy knows nothing of the opening. Philosophy does speak about the light of reason, but does not heed the opening of Being. The *lumen naturale*, the light of reason, throws light only on openness. It does concern the opening, but so little does it form it that it needs it in order to be able to illuminate what is present in the opening. This is true not only of philosophy's *method*, but also and primarily of its *matter*, that is, of the presence of what is present." (66). Importantly, the light of reason should not be understood as an extension of the way the history of philosophy has treated the term – from Plato to Aquinas to Descartes, the image of the human intellect is treated as a natural light of reason (Copobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 90). As Copobianco argues, Heidegger uses the term *lumen naturale* on his own terms, that is, in terms of the existential-ontological structure of Dasein; "the metaphor of the 'natural light' had been inextricably linked to this metaphysical understanding of the human being" (Copobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 90) and should be understood ontically. For a good discussion of the development of the term *Lichtung* through the path of Heidegger's thought, see: Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 87 and fol.

[113] Heidegger describes the relation of the revealing and concealing of the clearing: "What and who "is" the projector – that becomes graspable only out of the truth of the projection, yet it also becomes concealed at the same time. For this is what is most essential, namely, that the opening qua clearing brings into play the self-concealing, whereby the sheltering of truth first receives its ground and impetus." (CP 45-46/BZP 56)

[114] Sheehan, "What, after all, was Heidegger about?," 19.

humans are always in the process of living meaningful lives, picking out some possibilities while concealing an impenetrable, unmasterable play of possibility (or more to the later Heidegger's point – those possibilities that humans can pick out are only made possible because the concealed possibilities make them so).[115]

In a sense, the clearing is the gap between the passing and presencing of being,[116] *i.e.*, the opening from which the presencing of being shows itself. The deeper level from which the presencing of being arises (that is to say, what is hidden by the gap between the presencing and the passing of being) is what refuses the clearing of being – this is the ultimate ground of the clearing, a ground we will attempt to describe in the following chapters in terms of the nothing and the problem of transcendence. To return to the earlier metaphor of the de-densification of the forest, then, the clearing lightens the density of the forest such that the forest *can* appear. Moreover, the deeper level of the appearing forest is the necessary disappearance of what does not appear *as* the forest (or more to the point, that which does not appear *as such*) – the uncleared, so to speak. The clearing frees possibility only because it first necessarily conceals

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[115] Pöggeler understands being-in-the-world from the deeper perspective of care and the ontological clearing of being. Pöggeler explains: "Being, which is not at our disposal, places man into the totality of all beings, but in such a way that man comports himself to beings as beings, and thus is the clearing, the "there" of Being. The fact that Being is not at our disposal holds sway over man as his "dispositionality" [*Befindlichkeit*]. This reveals the fact that man finds himself [*sick befinded*] within the totality of all beings. This "dispositionality" also opens up access to nature thought of in a primordial manner or, as Heidegger later says, the "earth"." (Pöggeler, "Being and Appropriation," 90)

[116] Heidegger writes: "Time and the temporal mean what is perishable, what passes away in the course of time. Our language says with still greater precision: what passes away with time. For time itself passes away. But by passing away constantly, time remains as time. To remain means: not to disappear, thus, to presence. Thus time is determined by a kind of Being. How, then, is Being supposed to be determined by time? Being speaks out of the constancy of time's passing away." (EP 3)

possibility.[117] The concealment or disappearance is *necessary* given the fact that for *some*

possibility to appear, *other* possibility must disappear – put simply, everything can't be possible.

The clearing can be described as the opening of revealing and concealing, where what is revealed

is contingent on what is hidden (or concealed, refused, withdrawn, not-granted, or uncleared).[118]

Given that the clearing *clears away* possibility, or from a different perspective, because the

clearing *preserves* that which is not-granted as possibility (*i.e.*, the refusal, the non-granted, the

uncleared), and because that which is cleared away is ultimately the source for the clearing to

appear, the essence of the clearing is essentially the unknowable enigma from which possibility

appears.[119] Certainly, I can choose possibilities from those possibilities that appear to me as

possibilities, but the differentiation of possibilities that I *can* determine as *my* possibilities is

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[117] "And yet – beyond beings, not away from them but before them, there is still something else that happens. In the midst of beings as a whole an open place occurs. There is a clearing. Thought of in reference to beings, this clearing is more in being than are beings. This open center is therefore not surrounded by beings; rather, the clearing center itself encircles all that is, as does the nothing, which we scarely know. Beings can be as beings only if they stand within and stand out within what is cleared in this clearing. Only this clearing grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to the being that we ourselves are. Thanks to this clearing, beings are unconcealed in certain changing degrees. And yet a being can be *concealed*, as well, only within the sphere of what is cleared. Each being we encounter and which encoutners us keeps to this curious opposition of presencing, in that it always withholds itself at the same time in a concealment. The clearing in which beings stand is in itself at the same time concealment." (OWA 178)

[118] Sheehan concludes: "Thus the answer to Heidegger's basic question "How does meaning occur at all?" is: It happens because man is "passively" thrown into (appropriated to, or needed for) "actively" sustaining the meaning-process. In a word: *Ereignis* as reciprocity." (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 60)

[119] Sheehan describes the enigma as a passive, self-surpassing process: "Being-in, far from having anything to do with ordinary space (within-ness), refers to our ever-operative but unthematic *engagement* with meaning-giving, without which we could not know anything as meaning*ful*. Moreover, being-already-engaged-with-meaning (*In-der-Welt-sein*) is made up of man's bivalent relation to meaning: on the one hand, passively having to be related to the meaning-giving process (otherwise there is no man) and on the other hand, actively holding open or sustaining the meaning-giving process (otherwise there is no meaning). In short, as already engaged, both passively and actively, with meaning-giving, man necessarily sustains mind as the locus of the meaning-process. Which is another way of articulating the function of *Ereignis*" (Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 57-58). Also, for an interesting discussion of the throwness and passivity of Dasein in *Being and Time*, see Simon Critchley, "Enigma Variations: An Interpretation of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*," *Ratio* 2, vol. 15 (June 2002): 154-176.

granted from a deeper level of non-determinable undifferentiation, which is ultimately

unmasterable.[120] That is to say, the possibilities I can pick out *as* possibilities appear alongside

the disappearance of the possibilities that *have not been granted to appearance*, a non-granting

over which I have no control, and ultimately, of which I know nothing (except, perhaps, that they

are not-given to being). Nevertheless, the withdrawal of being (*i.e.*, non-being, the nothing) is

necessary to my being. In this way, I am permeated by the passivity of the hidden, receding,

withdrawing, uncleared part of being – indeed, a meaningful existence is granted from this

abyss-like ground of being.[121]

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[120] As Macdonald writes: "More generally, an *event* occurs only through the participation of the self in a play of this unmasterable possibility (*Seyn*), experienced as a differentiation of what-is and what-is-not that is constantly happening to me, producing actuality while always tacitly retreating within it." (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 39)

[121] Heidegger describes the passivity of our deliverance to the clearing in the following passage from "The Origin of the Work of Art". Although lengthy, the passage is worth quoting as it describes the power that the clearing has over humans, that is, the ultimately sway that the meaning-process has over human life. Life is the subject of the clearing process or *Ereigni*s. Heidegger writes: "Things are, and human beings, gifts, and sacrifices are, animals and plants are, equipment and works are. The particular being stands in Being. Through Being there passes a veiled fatality that is ordained between the godly and the countergodly. There is much in being that man cannot master. There is but little that comes to be known. What is known remain inexact, what is mastered insecure. Beings are never of our making, or even merely our representations, as it might all too easily seem. When we contemplate this whole as one, then we apprehend, so it appears, all that is – though we grasp it crudely enough. And yet – beyond things, not away from them, there is still something else that happens. In the midst of beings as a whole an open place occurs. There is a clearing. Thought of in reference to beings, this clearing is more in being than are beings. This open center is therefore not surrounded by beings; rather, the clearing center itself encircles all that is, as does the nothing, which we scarcely know. Beings can be as beings only if they stand within and stand out within what is cleared in this clearing. Only this clearing grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to the being that we ourselves are. Thanks to this clearing, beings are unconcealed in certain changing degrees. And yet a being can be *concealed*, as well, only within the sphere of what is cleared. Each being we encounter and which encounters us keeps to this curious opposition of presencing, in that it always withholds itself at the same time in a concealment. Concealment, however, prevails in the midst of beings in a twofold way. Beings refuse themselves to us down to that one and seemingly least feature which we touch upon most readily when we can say no more of beings than that they are. Concealment as refusal is not simply and only the limit of knowledge in any given circumstance, but the beginning of the clearing of what is cleared. But concealment, though of another sort, to be sure, at the same time also occurs within what is cleared. One being places itself in front of another being,

If we examine for a moment the shift in the discussion of the clearing,[122] we notice that

the early Heidegger discloses humans as the site from which the density of possibility is first

alleviated,[123] and the later Heidegger reveals that humans themselves appear in the clearing of

Ereignis.[124] From another perspective, on the one hand, the early Heidegger discusses the

clearing as revealing the temporalizing of Dasein (that Dasein is always in a process of working

out possibilities in time), and on the other hand, the later Heidegger discusses the clearing as

revealing the historicality of temporality (that the possibilities of the meaning process are worked

out by history). Therefore, the later discussion of the clearing shifts from the site of its

appearance (Dasein) to the source or origin of its occurrence (*Ereignis*). Arguably, the shift

between the early discussions of the clearing to Heidegger's later examination of the term is

telling – the early Heidegger concentrates on describing what is granted to appearance and the

later Heidegger investigates what refuses appearance. One way of looking at the development of

the term 'the clearing' and of the development of Heidegger's path as a whole, then, is to

understand Heidegger's early investigation as prioritizing *revealing* possibility and his later

investigation as prioritizing *concealing* possibility. In other words, the early Heidegger attempts

to describe what is shown or revealed as possibility, a priority noticeable in his use of the

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the one helps to hide the other, the former obscures the latter, a few obstruct many, one denies all. Here concealment is not simply refusal. Rather, a being appears, but present itself as other than it is." (OWA 178-179)

[122] For a different discussion of the shift in Heidegger's discussion of *Lichtung* between his early and later works, see Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 91.

[123] BT 171/SZ 133

[124]Heidegger writes: "For what is self-concealing of this clearing, the remoteness of the undecidability, is no mere objectively present and irrelevant void but is the essential occurrence of the event as the very essence of the event (of the hesitant self-withholding which, as belonging, already appropriates Da-sein) and is the retention of the moment and of the site of the first decision." (CP 21/BZP 23-24)

clearing, which privileges what is shown in the clearing (*e.g.*, the forest that appears). On the other hand, the later Heidegger is more interested in describing what is not shown or concealed as possibility, an interest that is also perceptible in his shifting use of the clearing. Indeed, the later use of the clearing emphasizes what disappears from view, the ground of appearance *as such* (*e.g.*, the necessary de-densification or concealment such that the forest *can* appear *as* a forest). More generally, the early Heidegger tends to focus on questions concerning the understanding of being, that is, how Dasein understands and appropriates itself and the world, the conditions of possibility of this (self-)appropriation, and the different ways Dasein can relate to its self-understanding. The later Heidegger, on the other hand, seems to focus more on questions concerning the fact that the understanding of being is itself appropriated by the more fundamental process of history, that is, how being is itself an appropriation of the history of thought, how this history of thought is itself *thought* from a historically situated conception of time, and how the transcendence of being *as such* is the event of being preserved by the appropriation process of existence.

What, then, is *Ereignis* and how does the clearing help us elucidate the term? *Ereignis* expresses the constant unfolding of history, which is lived out in particular ways by particular individuals.[125] The movement of the historical-process, which is itself a meaning process, is the source of existence – it opens possibility by clearing a space for humans to discover themselves

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[125] Heidegger writes: "The meditation of "fundamental ontology" (laying of the foundation of onto*logy* as its overcoming) constitutes the *transition* from the end of the first beginning to the other beginning. This transition, however, is at the same time the run-up to the leap which alone can iniate a beginning and especially the other beginning as constantly surpassed by the first. Prepared here in the transition is the most originary and thus the most historical decision, that either – or which allows no hiding places and no regions for evasion: *either* to remain trammeled to the end and to its running out, i.e., to ever new variants of "metaphysics" which become ever cruder, more groundless, and more aimless (the new "biologism" and the like), *or* to initiate the other beginning, i.e., to be resolved toward its long preparation." (CP 180/BZP 228-229)

in a meaningful world while concurrently concealing a play of unmasterable possibility not granted to existence.[126] Thus, humans live out history – they do not make it. The sway of the historical-meaning-process is something we are granted – it is a gift.[127] But, the gift is not a choice – there was no choice in living, or in living meaningfully, or in being a part of history or in the way history appropriates us. As Heidegger writes, "Beyng – the remarkable erroneous belief is that beyng must always "be" and that the most constantly and the longer it is, the "more eminently" it is."[128] We are deployed by the appropriating process of existence, a process grounded in the event and gift of being. We are ultimately indebted to the event. Heidegger suggests we have a debt, or a duty, something that we have to do, and yet over which we have no choice. The debt is necessary and necessarily paid. We repay it through playing out our part in the preservation of being.[129]

Thus, *Ereignis* opens up the possibility of a discussion of hiddenness and allows us to think about what is buried by existence, time, and history. We have begun to refine our understanding of what is ultimately at stake in the problem of transcendence. Transcendence certainly involves going beyond present possibilities, but the self-surpassing nature of transcendence is dependent on a deeper level of transcendence – the process between what

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[126] Ibid.

[127] Heidegger writes: "Thus true time appears as the "It" of which we speak when we say: It gives Being. The destiny in which It gives Being lies in the extending of time. Does this reference show time to be the "It" that gives Being? By no means. For time itself remains the gift of an "It gives" whose giving preserves the realm in which presence is extended." (TB 17)

[128] CP 200/BZP 253-255

[129] Notably, *how* we play out our part in the preservation of being will determine how we relate to our debt, if we *do* recognize our responsibility. I will discuss this in greater detail in the following chapters.

something *is* and what it *is not*.[130] The clearing reveals and shows us possibility, but what

appears is only part of the work being done by the clearing – the major part is done in the tension

between that which is cleared away and concealed, and that which appears in the clearing.[131] The

major work of the clearing is done in what is not-granted, or not-given, or refused, or renounced

to appearance.[132] I have therefore arrived again at the question concerning concealment *as such*.

In order to develop my understanding of *Ereignis*, to continue exploring my path of reading

Heidegger, to further define my understanding of the meaning of 'meaning', and to continue

engaging with the problem of transcendence, I must ask: What disappears in the clearing and is

cleared away? What is concealed in *Ereignis*? Indeed, *what is not possible*?[133]

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[130] As Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann argues, *Ereignis* is an elaboration of the transcendence in the early
Heidegger, a turn from thinking transcendence "within fundamental-ontological thinking" towards "the origin of
being-historical thinking" (von Hermann, "Enowning-Historical Thinking,"110). He contends that "The counter-
resonance of enowning-thrown and enowned projecting-open, and hence that enowing, is the prevailing perspective
for all questions of being-historical thinking, just as transcendence and horizon were the persepctive for the path of
questioning which initiated the first pathway of being-question, i.e., all questions of fundamental-ontological
thinking. That is to say, each sentence of *Contributions* should be interpreted according to the perspective of
enowning, which is the midpoint of all essential swaying of the truth of be-ing." (112)

[131] As Heidegger writes: "Appropriation neither *is*, nor *is* Appropriation *there*… Appropriation appropriates." (TB
24)

[132] Heidegger describes the non-given in the following passage: "Yet if beyng essentially occurs as refusal, and if
this latter itself should protrude into *its* clearing and be preserved as refusal, then the preparedness for the refusal can
consist only in *renunciation*. Here, however, renunciation is hardly a mere matter of not wanting to have something
or leaving something aside; instead, it takes place as the highest form of possession, whose height obtains its
decisiveness in the frankness of the enthusiasm for the inconceivable donation of the refusal." (CP 20/BZP 22-23)

[133] As Heidegger incites us: "It is because only the greatest occurrence, the most intimate event, can still save us
from lostness in the bustle of mere incidents and machinations. What must eventuate is what opens being to us and
places us back into being and in that way brings us to ourselves and face to face with work and sacrifice." (CP
46/BZP 56-58)

Section 3: Another version of meaning (The primacy of what is 'not' possible or prioritizing possibility)

How do we describe what is not possible?[134] In other words, what do I think about when I try to think about what is not possible? Do I merely negate possibility and call it the 'not'? Do I think of the 'not' as a type of non-presence or absence, as the opposite of a present thing? Perhaps if I approach the question from a different perspective, namely, in terms of what I can and cannot do, I may be able to gain ground. When I think of the things I cannot do, there are things I cannot do because of my current situation (*i.e.,* given my real possibilities), but can imagine doing if I think beyond my current situation (for example, outside is early winter and I am working in a cold, dry room, but I can imagine sitting in a quaint European café on a lazy, summer day). There are things I cannot do because of the type of being I am (*i.e.,* given my logical possibilities), but can imagine doing if I imagine being other than I am (I can't breathe under water, but I can imagine that I could, if I were a fish). But, can I think of the things I

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[134] Even before describing the 'not', we need to address a terminological point: how should we refer to the 'not' possible? For example, is the 'not' possible the same as the impossible? Given Heidegger's discussion of death as the possibility of impossibility, it seems that what is not possible is different from what is impossible. Although both the 'not' possible and the impossible *are not present possibilities*, death *is* a possibility of human life – in fact, it is the utmost possibility of human life, the possibility that gives existence all its possibilities. On the other hand, it seems that what is not possible is *not a possibility*. We will therefore keep the two terms separate. And what of the nullity – is the 'not' possible the same as the nullity? Again, it appears that the terms have slightly different implications. The nullity, for example, is one way that Heidegger describes a basic feature of existence, a feature that is revealed as the individual person realizes the mineness of death; the nullity reveals Dasein as thrown projection. The 'not' possible, however, is not a basic feature of existence so much as it is the possibility of existence. What is 'not' possible transcends existence and therefore, it transcends the nullity. In other words, what is 'not' possible is fundamental to the nullity. Therefore, we will distinguish the two terms as well. How, then, can we shorthand what is not possible? When needed, we will discuss the idea as 'the 'not' possible', or 'the 'not''; we will also describe it as 'what is not possible' and, in its wordiest configuration, as 'that which is not possible'. We will also sometimes refer to it as what 'cannot be done'.

cannot do *as such*? Can I think of the things that I cannot do because they are not possible?[135] An interesting bifurcation presents itself as we discuss what I can and cannot do. In fact, more than one way exists to think about what is not possible – there are things that are not possible because it is negated by possibility (and thus still possible on some level), and there are things that are not possible *as such*.[136] Furthermore, there is more than one side to what is negated by possibility – there is the field of what is *no longer possible* given the actual world, and there is the field of what is *not yet possible* given the actual world.

Broadly speaking, I am interested in what is not possible *as such* – the most fundamental level of what is not possible. My path to the deepest level of the 'not' requires that I first examine other levels of the 'not' – the levels established by the 'not' *as such*. The present section will attempt to pick up where the last section ended: at the task of thinking the unthought. Our goal is to describe the 'not' concretely in order to bring the discussion of the 'not' *as such* in the later Heidegger to some clarity. To accomplish the task, the section is divided into two main parts. First, I will explore concrete examples of the 'not' in order to gain clarity on how the 'not' shows itself in life. The examples will illustrate different aspects of what is not possible, and aim

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[135] Macdonald explains "Succinctly, we might say that so-called real possibility, homogeneous with the ego's syntheses and co-given horizonally, has as its condition of possibility a granting-denying hidden within the intentional nexus of actuality and potentiality – a possibilizing that we can glimpse only negatively, for example, in the fact that the positivity of beings is 'powered' by an immeasurable withholding that is inadequately rendered by the phenomenological tradition as horizonality. This is the non-given nihiliating-happening – the negativity – that traditional ontology cannot quite grasp, centred as it is on the presence of beings." (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 39)

[136] Macdonald makes the argument that the key to understanding possibility is found in Heidegger's discussion of the refusal of being. Like Pöggeler, Macdonald argues that one of the later Heidegger's main interests is to deepen the destruction of the history of ontology, but Macdonald adds the further point that Heidegger views the history of metaphysics as a path that conceals a fundamental nullity of being or that which is not possible or negative possibility.

to provide perspective on the receding horizon of the 'not' *as such*. Second, I will investigate how the later Heidegger describes what is not possible *as such* and attempt to gain some clarity on the elusive topic. To help along the investigation, I will look at Heidegger's discussion of earth and the strife between earth and world that is revealed in artworks. From the discussion, I will gain insight into what is concealed by average life, and aim to further clarify concealment *as such*. Moreover, the investigation will continue to develop the investigation in the previous section inasmuch as the tension between earth and world is one way to understand the opening of the clearing. Strife is one way to understand *Ereignis*.

In conclusion, and as a counterpoint to my investigation into the revealing nature of the artwork, I will consider the importance of thinking the 'not' through a brief examination of the concealing nature of technology. The discussion will deepen my understanding of how the self-concealment of everyday life necessarily recedes for life to be lived. Crucially, I will also examine how the pernicious fixity of technology and of the technological way of life – that life is predominantly occupied with outcomes and efficiency and pre-established values of serviceability – can only be revealed (*i.e.,* can only be thought, questioned, uprooted) if the self-concealment of technology is shown. As Heidegger intimates, thinking the 'not' is a necessary task in part to disrupt the totalizing nature of the technological way of life. Thus, my investigation into the 'not' will not only further clarify what Heidegger means by *Ereignis*, but it will also bring my discussion to bear on a new topic, a topic I will introduce in the present section and will continue to explore in the next chapter, namely, *the question of what we must do given what we can and cannot do*. I will introduce in a preliminary fashion Heidegger's understanding of normativity.

Section 3.1.1: The new world of Rosa Parks – the 'not' of real possibilities

Although the 'not' as such cannot be described *as* something in concrete terms, the 'not'

can be worked out on different levels. Examining concrete examples of the 'not' will allow us a

glimpse at how the fixity of average everydayness can be disrupted. [137] We will look at two

examples in particular. The first example comes from Iain Macdonald's essay "What Is, Is More

Than It Is" and is intended to illustrate both Theodor Adorno's understanding of 'civil courage'

[*Zivilcourage*] and Heidegger's discussion of the 'not'.[138] Macdonald presses into the harder

question of how to think concretely about what is not possible, an effort that sets him apart from

the critics we previously discussed. Most often, the 'not' is absorbed in discussions concerning

ontological difference [*Differenz*], that is, the difference between the meaning-giving and the

meaningful[139] (or between Being and being,[140] between the network of relations and things,[141]

between existence and individual life[142]). In other words, the 'not' is often discussed in terms of

the problem of describing ontological difference as a process of differentiation (in this case, the

'not' is understood as difference between what is and is not differentiated).[143] The point is the

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[137] Macdonald contends: "to think being as possibility is not a purely formal gesture, but rather the necessary precondition for responding adequately to the public realm and the general fixity of beings in language. The question that Heidegger is implicitly posing is the following: in being concerned with beings, is there not always an 'excess' possibility that accompanies more obvious possibilities, that is, a possibility that actuality does not acknowledge in its determination of possibility?" (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 49)

[138] Ibid., 44-46

[139] Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*,"

[140] See Otto Pöggeler's "Being as Appropriation".

[141] Heidegger BT Division I, Chapter 3

[142] Sheehan "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 42-68.

[143] Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation,"100.

ground of the difference between the differentiated and the non-differentiated remains uninvestigated.[144] Macdonald's essay offers an example that illustrates the difference between real possibilities and blocked possibilities. By extension, his example importantly indicates the non-differentiated ground of possibility from which real and actual possibilities arise. The example is of Rosa Parks.[145]

As is well known, Rosa Parks refused to relinquish her bus seat to a white passenger, as it was required by law at the time in Montgomery, Alabama.[146] Parks' action occurs on a few levels of possibility. On one level, 'not standing' is a possibility as much as 'standing', as much as lying down, or jumping, or anything else that is possible given the physical boundaries of the situation. Of course Rosa Parks can sit or she can stand – both options are physically possible for her. However, the physical condition does not determine the *meaning* of the possible actions

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[144] As Macdonald writes, "Heidegger's concept of possibility as a refusal of be-ing" "is a kind of possibility wholly or mostly unacknowledged in the tradition." (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 33)

[145] Ibid., 44.

[146] In Macdonald's words: "In December 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a standing white passenger, as required by law at the time in Montgomery, Alabama. As she recounted in a late interview, the policeman called to the scene asked her: 'why don't you stand up?' – to which she replied: 'I don't think I should have to stand up.' The particularity of the scene lies in the manner in which Parks marks her refusal. She is well aware of the law and the realities it defines: stand or suffer the consequences of the law. She does not deny the authority of the bus driver or the policeman, yet she acts rationally and intelligibly *against* the reality they represent. Of course, abstractly speaking, sitting and standing are just generic possibilities of human beings, as Aristotle himself points out. But in the social context described, the possibility of remaining seated does not just represent a generic real possibility and its circumstantial consequences; it also represents *another* reality, not at all actual, in which universal human equality would *preclude* the *actual* outcome. This is especially clear in the grammatical mood of Parks' reply, which is optative in character: 'I don't think I should have to stand up' as equivalent to 'thought with the force of law you say I must, another organization of reality is both imaginable and realizable in which I would not have to'. This implicit reference to another order of things is not mere wishful thinking, as the repercussions of her gesture later showed. It is as though refusing to stand operated on two levels at once: on which existing actuality just followed its course; and another, on which actuality could no longer follow its course. Such gestures reach for a possibility that the existing order denies, or that remains invisible and unrealizable because conceptual blinkers put it out of sight. But once realized (admitting, of course, that once may not be enough), they can transform actuality and the possibilities it contains." (Ibid., 44)

(*i.e.,* standing or not standing). What *does* determine the meaning of the two choices is the legal limitation and Rosa Parks' interpretation of the legal limitation. Given the law at the time, 'not standing' was not a real possibility (at least, it was not a possibility without punitive consequences). Moreover – and this is the point that distinguishes the actual order from the imagined order (ushered in by Rosa Parks) – given social (and legal) expectation and acceptability, it is *impossible* that a black person *not* stand to relinquish their seat to a white passenger, and this is a crucial part of what makes that specific social order intelligible. Until otherwise thought, the law presented only one field of real possibilities, a field in which the unjust world of black oppression is (tacitly) accepted all the time. For example, every time a black person relinquishes their seat to a white person and every time a white person mandates that a black person relinquish their seat, the social order is preserved. By not standing, Rosa Parks discloses and uproots the apparently 'natural' order by expressing a (previously impossible) possibility. In this way, 'not standing' is an act of defiance that goes against the rules of the social order.

Therefore, Rosa Parks' decision not to stand ushers in a new order – one in which 'not standing' *becomes* a real possibility. By not standing, Rosa Parks renders the (legally) impossible *a possibility* and thereby transforms the social order. In the new social order, 'not standing' *is* a possibility. In fact, 'not standing' is subtended by a new reservoir of impossibilities (such as existing in a world where 'not standing' is impossible or existing in a world where standing is the *only imaginable* possibility). In other words, the social order in which Rosa Parks previously lived is nullified by her act of civil courage. Adorno's point is the following: if we truly strive for a just social order, we must imagine the impossibilities shrouded by the existing order's pre-

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established set of real possibilities, otherwise life will continue to be a submission to the narrow

range of predetermined choices.[147] If we aim to imagine a different world, if we aspire to

imagine *real* difference, we must press into those blocked possibilities, which can at times

remain unthought or unthinkable.[148]

The discussion of imagining difference intimates a new question, one that I will discuss

in greater detail in the following chapters – *i.e.*, the question of ontological difference

[*Differenz*]. As a way of setting up our later discussion, it is worth introducing the question and

topic here especially as it concerns the 'not'. What, then, does Heidegger mean by 'difference'

[*Unterschied*]? In point of fact, difference is not just the other side of the object, the other choice

not chosen, or the act we did not do – this form of difference exists as part of the field of real

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[147] Macdonald writes: "Adornian possibility is the *negative* image of the distortions of real possibility. For example, it corresponds not to the apparent natural order of things but to the *other* actuality, conspicuous by its absence, in Rosa Parks' 'I don't think I should have to….'" Hence possibility in this emphatic sense can be said to *heterogeneous*, in contrast to the homogeneous possibilities pre-delineated within actuality… To summarize: heterogeneous possibility, as the product of an 'exact fantasy' or an *ars inveniendi*, is essentially a middle term between real and logical possibility that proposes a transformation of our vision of actuality and the real possibilities it contains… Adorno's philosophy thereby formulates a demand not only that we 'ontologically' accept that such possibilities exist but that we make an effort to imagine them and to realize them, rather than succumbing to the social reinforcement of the status quo or to the metaphysical prejudices that underpin it. In other words, Adorno asks that we think *the horizon of the horizon* of experience, or the possibility of *other* possibilities." (Ibid., 45)

[148] Macdonald describes imagined possibilities: "Generally speaking: any such profound transformation of actuality requires an appeal to an indeterminate possibility available at first 'merely logically' within the contradictions that plague actuality. ('Merely logically' because the possibilities in question contradict the apparent natural order of things and so may seem absurd or wishful.) Interestingly, this notion of possibility cannot be reduced to what is usually called real possibility. As opposed to merely logical possibilities, real possibility represents what is in fact actualisable according to actuality. But here, as the product of an 'exact fantasy', Adorno is asking us to look for possibilities beyond those sanctioned by actuality, in part because the real possibilities on offer are just what the existing order manipulates and uses to obstruct difference. (For example, one might consider the real possibility of changing careers as a way to better one's lot, but in a world in which all labour is alienated, this possibility and the hope it names are no more than a screen that conceals rather than reveals the actuality of alienation.) Certainly, Adorno's concept of possibility is a co-given horizon of the present, *like* real possibility. It is not pure fantasy, but rather *exact* fantasy, constructed out of the contradictions of lived existence." (Ibid., 44-45)

possibilities, *i.e.,* things we can do given the present order of things. A deeper form of difference, ontological difference [*Differenz*] refers to possibilities that are not possible given the natural order of things.[149] For Heidegger, difference is a necessary philosophical act if meaning (and transcendence) is to be truly sought;[150] difference can be understood as possibilities *other* than those granted to us.[151] Although we can strive to think about possibilities other than those granted by the natural order of things, for Heidegger, the point is that concealment is not so much a political condition as an ontological one.[152] Therefore, what we can do (*i.e.,*think about hidden possibilities) is only possible given what we must do (*i.e.,*participate in our ontological condition). Another way to put the earlier question concerning what is not possible is to ask, how, then, do we think about difference? We must, like Rosa Parks, strive to think about those possibilities that are hidden by the real possibilities established by the natural order of things.

From the Rosa Parks example, then, I clarified one level in which the 'not' appears in life. Our real possibilities, the choices that appear to us *as* our life choices, consist of only one

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[149] As Heidegger explains, ontological difference is a way of understanding the different types of beings (for example, the difference between being and Being). The implicit point here is that the difference between beings is understood in terms of what a being is not.

[150] Pöggeler explains the ontological difference: "If beings are understood in their Being, the difference between Being and beings is broken open. This difference [*Unterschied*], the ontological difference [*Differenz*], constitutes the center of that thinking which, as meta-physics, transcends beings to Being. Heidegger seeks to show how this difference is at the same time the carrying-out of "overcoming" or transcendence as well we as "arrival" or presence." (Pöggeler, "Being as Appropriation," 106)

[151] Heidegger writes: "There is presence only when opening is dominant. Opening is named with *aletheia*, unconcealment, but not thought as such." (EP 70)

[152] One important difference between Adorno and Heidegger is that it is not the act of imagining difference, as Adorno claims, which matters in the relation between what is and is not possible. Difference, in the ontological sense of *other possibilities*, occurs despite our willing them. As Macdonald clarifies: "it is no doubt true that Heidegger's philosophy is almost exclusively ontological-descriptive, rather than historical-normative." (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 41)

field of possibilities amongst many. Our average way of living has us make choices based on the way life appears most of the time, and our ordinary thinking obstructs us from pressing into other possibilities in which a different form of self-expression (*i.e.,* differentiation) might be sought.[153] Put roughly, it is difficult to imagine we can sit when our world presents only one real possibility – to stand. To think about the possibility of not standing opens up another way (via Adorno) of engaging with Heidegger;[154] I discovered that an investigation into the 'not' of real possibilities (*i.e.,* to imagine other possibilities than those presented in the natural order of things) leads me to a discussion of what we must do. I am therefore beginning to elucidate a transcendent and fundamental intersection between what is not possible and what we 'must' do (*i.e.,* between possibility and normativity).[155]

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[153] Macdonald describes negativity: "Succinctly, we might say that so-called real possibility, homogeneous with the ego's syntheses and co-given horizonally, has as its condition of possibility a granting-denying hidden within the intentional nexus of actuality and potentiality – a possibilizing that we can glimpse only negatively, for example, in the fact that the positivity of beings is 'powered' by an immeasurable withholding that is inadequately rendered by the phenomenological tradition as horizonality. This is the non-given nihilating-happening – the negativity – that traditional ontology cannot quite grasp, centered as it is on the presence of beings." (Ibid., 39)

[154] Macdonald describes the transcendence of the negative: "Thus the point of critique is that *Dasein*'s formal 'putting-itself-beyond-itself' and ultimately be-ing's refusal are just screens that block us from effecting real transcendence from out of material conditions of existence. The key difference lies in how Adorno and Heidegger think transcendence, the 'more' of 'more-intentionality'. For Heidegger, it is an immemorial negativity that remains negative, a 'possibilizing' (or 'nihilating') that drives actuality and real possibility while always retreating within them. For Adorno, on the other hand, it is the dialectical transcendence of actuality that aims, ultimately, at real social and political renewal." (Ibid., 40)

[155] Macdonald discusses Heidegger's priority of possibility over actuality in two ways: "First, the ontological priority of possibility stems… from a necessary possibilizing that drives the nexus of actuality and possibility… Possibility [understood] as the refusal of be-ing signifies the inevitable loss or return to the immeasurable potentiality that is proper to being. In particular, the analysis of horizonality showed that the synthesis of actuality and co-given potentialities presupposes an abiding and inexhaustible reserve of horizonality beyond what is co-given at any given moment." (Macdonald 47). Second, Macdonald raises Heidegger's critique of the public realm and the fixity of language and pushes to the point to its outer limit: "the claim is more far-reaching insofar as *what* and *how* a being is or can be is generally determined in advance by a preestablished way of thinking that does not let beings be what they are. We judge things by their apparent ends and effectiveness, by the measure of what already has a name, not by what falls outside these ends, by what runs counter to effectiveness, or by what has of yet no pre-

3.1.2: The lost world of the mother – the existential 'not'

The Rosa Parks example shows us that something is hidden by the field of real possibility, yet real possibility only appears because it is presently possible. In other words, real possibility appears because of temporality. Given the present moment and my present possibilities, I can do certain things and not others. How, then, does temporality relate to what is not possible? To address the question and to continue thinking about what is not possible in concrete terms, I will raise a second example, one that illustrates difference as a basic character of existence (*i.e.,* as a fundamental part of our existential condition). Let us recall for a moment the example from Thomas Sheehan of the multi-tasking woman making a business call, caring for her child, and drinking a Scotch.[156] As I mentioned previously, when Heidegger discusses the 'not' as a field of concealed possibilities, he does not just mean the things we *could have* done with the objects such as using the glass of Scotch as a paperweight, or grabbing a dirty baby bib as a dishcloth to soak up the spilt milk, or avoiding the office call and choosing instead to relax with a drink while listening to music. Discussing possibilities in the way just described remains within the field of real possibilities (things that can be done as an extension of the woman's existing world), a field circumscribed by the givenness of the world within which the woman lives.

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established name (*das Namenlose*). To this, Heidegger opposes another vision of possibility as implicitly founding the kind of possibility determined by actuality. To glimpse it, he asks us to consider how we first come to concern ourselves with things… [Things] show themselves to be the things they are when we concern ourselves with what they might be *beyond* pre-existing notions, known effects, and instrumental utility. In other words, Heidegger is giving a short account of possibility as prior to pre-determined forms or ends." (Ibid., 48-49)

[156] Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*," 55.

However, the woman's real possibility arises from the withdrawal of other possibilities (or as one critic describes it, from retentional non-being). [157] One such possibility is that the woman *was never* a mother; it *cannot* be the case that the woman never had a child. The woman can choose to act in various ways to her child (as a caring or uncaring mother, loving or abusive, attentive or neglectful). However, she cannot choose to *have never had a child* and the world of possibility extending from the life of the woman who 'never had a child' is fundamentally not possible. To underline the point further, if the child dies, the woman will be childless, but her childlessness now is different in kind from the childlessness before she had her child. While the external state of childlessness appears the same, the possibilities are profoundly different. The childlessness of the woman who loses her child does not have the possibility of 'never having had a child' and, tragically, of 'never having lost a child'. Both these possibilities (*i.e.,* never having had and never having lost a child), however, were *actual* and *real* possibilities for the woman before she gave birth to her first child. In the new and present world where both those possibilities are now actual possibilities, a different ground of possibilities takes shape and a modified world of real possibility is opened. Of course, the fundamental point of the example of

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[157] In order to understand what Heidegger means by 'refusal' and what work, if anything, the primordial negativity does, Macdonald argues that we must consider Heidegger's idea in the context of the history of metaphysics especially as it appears in Husserl's intentional treatment of possibility (Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 34). For Husserl, the negative is the non-being of the positive, or the potential, which recedes as the actual appears. Macdonald cites the example of Husserl's die to illustrate the philosopher's ideas on the horizons of being and non-being. The example shows us that what appears is contingent on a play of possibilities that disappear as we press into actual possibilities. As we continue to press into actuality, other possibilities continue to recede from view. The point is that the receding possibilities – Husserl's version of non-being – are thought in terms of actual possibilities. In other words, non-being is not-actual-possibility, but it is possibility all the same. "So in the case of Husserl's cube or die, as I turn it in my hands the sides that disappear from view fade into retentional non-being and potentialities of making them present once again; and likewise, as a new side comes into view, it emerges from protentional non-being and potentialities proper to perception and the thing. These coordinated (spatiotempopral) potentialities are horizons proper to the object as it is given in the intentional relation… In Heideggerian terms, horizonality is therefore to be construed as the being of beings, according to phenomenology." (34)

the mother is *not* that any *definite* possibility matters. Nor is the point that fundamental meaning

can be discovered in the disclosure of the *definite* possibilities precluded by a *definite* reality.

The ontological point is that possibility *as such* appears from the withdrawal of indefinite, non-

determinable possibility. The example of the mother *does*, however, illustrate that our *actual*

possibilities determine what is no longer possible for us in general and, importantly, *actual*

possibilities determine what is *not yet* possible (but may be actualized). In other words, the way

we live determines how we can *no longer* live, how we *cannot* live, and how we do *not yet* live.

In short, possibility reveals temporality. Parenthetically, the *not yet* possible is part of the

problem of thinking about the other beginning of philosophy and the transcendence of being,

topics we will discuss in greater detail in the following chapters.

3.1.3: What do the examples reveal?

As the Rosa Parks example shows us, there are other possibilities hidden by our field of

real possibilities, and one way to understand *difference* is as the relation between *real*

possibilities and *other* possibilities. The Rosa Parks example gives us a way to think about

difference on a material and political level. Therefore, the 'not' is thought of in terms of social

and political transcendence. The example illustrates what it means to challenge the existing order

of real possibilities by thinking the 'not' of difference.[158] In a sense, from the Rosa Parks

example, we gain insight into the task of the destruction of the history of ontology, or the task of

thinking the other beginning of philosophy, or in other words, the transcendence of being. Just as

Rosa Parks must think beyond the pre-established images of the social and political order within

which she lives, the meaning of being can only be freed from misconception (*i.e.,* the

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[158] Ibid., 44 (on real and logical possibilities).

transcendence of being is only possible) if philosophy thinks beyond the path of the history of metaphysics. To think what is yet unthought, we must like Rosa Parks defy the apparently 'natural' order of thought.

On the other hand, the example of the multi-tasking woman shows us that *existence is always beyond itself* both in *what it is* and in *what it is not*. In this case, the 'not' is discussed in terms of the possibilities that disappear from view such that actual possibilities can appear. The multi-tasking woman exemplifies the way contingencies are always a part of life,[159] and therefore, passivity rather than activity, or concealing rather than revealing, is the ground of the meaning process. The further point we are making with the example of the mother is that difference occurs as an inherent part of existence. Existence is, in a sense, a process of differentiation or determination.[160] As we live, some possibilities become actualities while others are cleared away such that they are not possible. The example therefore reveals that the 'not' of difference is a basic character of being.[161]

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[159] Ibid., 35-36 (on contingencies in cube example).

[160] As Macdonald contends: "there is a non-givenness that subtends co-givenness." Further along he writes: "There is presence only because there is a reserve of possibility of withholding of being that the ego constantly delimits and redelimits but does not exhaust." (Ibid., 37)

[161] As Heidegger writes in OWA: "Concealment can be a refusal or merely a dissembling. We are never fully certain whether it is the one or the other. Concealment conceals and dissembles itself. This means that the open place in the midst of beings, the clearing, is never a rigid stage with a permanently raised curtain on which the play of beings runs its course. Rather, the clearing happens only as this double concealment. The unconcealment of beings – this is never a merely existent state, but a happening… [The] clearing is pervaded by a constant concealment in the double form of refusal and dissembling…. The essence of truth, that is, of unconcealment, is dominated throughout by a denial… *This denial, in the form of a double concealment, belongs to the essence of truth as unconcealment*." (OWA 179)

Interestingly, the issue raised in the example of the mother is fundamental to the point clarified by the Rosa Parks example. Our real possibilities (and the other possibilities hidden by our real possibilities) are grounded by the very existence that opens real possibilities, an existence characterized by the differentiation between actuality and possibility.[162] What is not possible can be discussed in terms of an unquestioning and ordinary understanding of real possibilities, as was illustrated by the Rosa Parks example.[163] Furthermore, what is not possible can *also* be discussed existentially, in terms of how possibility is a basic feature of temporality (*i.e.,* life as it is lived in time). We actualize possibility granted from an unmasterable ground of undifferentiation, and this has concrete implications on the meaning of our life.[164] What is no longer possible for us is contingent on actual possibility; likewise, what we can do in the future is also dependent on our present possibilities. The co-givenness of the appearance and disappearance of possibility is an existential fact of life – it is one way to describe the fundamental transcendence of Dasein. Therefore, the examples provide different ways to think the 'not' concretely and thereby help clarify a path of thinking the 'not' *as such*. Nevertheless, the examples do not reveal the fundamental point.

Macdonald makes a deeper point concerning Heidegger's discussion of the 'not', a point that transcends both examples. He argues that the basic point is not that there are *specific* ways in which life is not lived or *particular* opportunities missed.[165] Likewise, it is not the particular way

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[162] See Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 44.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Macdonald makes the point: "Thus the ego's more-intentionality synthetically fills up the objective sense of the cube; but, at the same time, it is driven by a constant and concomitant 'becoming-less' that is not in the ego's power:

that possibilities disappear from view that matters.[166] Rather, the fundamental point is that

existence only appears because of all the ways it does not appear. As Macdonald argues,

Heidegger's deeper point is that existence is the discovering of itself amidst a play of

unmasterable possibilities.[167] He writes: "Ultimately, the I decides very little, precisely because

the 'I can' is determined and bound by a tacit giving or granting of possible being that I have

always already uncovered and construed, habitually forgetting in the process that actuality and its

horizons are the precipitates of an incessantly renewed withholding that I cannot

circumscribe."[168] Therefore, the concrete examples provide a way into thinking the fundamental

point: the appearance of existence is dependent on what appears from out of concealment and

then disappears again from view, revealing reveals from a ground of concealment, or in other

words, meaning is granted because of the refusal and withdrawing of meaning.

Section 3.2.1: Art – disrupting the fixity of ordinary thinking

Possibilities show themselves *as* possibilities because they have been circumscribed by

the history of ideas, a history that understands life and meaning in certain ways and not others.

Or more succinctly, our lives are lived out by the momentum of history. To be certain, life *can*

appear otherwise, possibilities *can* appear otherwise if and only if life *can* be thought otherwise.

Most of the time, however, ordinary thinking cannot think beyond real possibilities. In fact, real

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an abiding and inexhaustible reserve of horizonality beyond what is co-given at any given moment. I may turn the cube as I wish, but as I turn it *what becomes absent* is only partly due to my having chosen to turn it as I did. The ego's 'gaining' the cube-as-cube in its horizonal objectivity follows only from constantly 'losing' the cube in a way that the ego can only compensate for by its 'I can' and 'I do'." (Ibid., 37)

[166] Ibid., 35-36

[167] Ibid., 39

[168] Ibid., 37

possibilities for the most part conceal other possibilities – real possibilities concurrently show us a field of possibility (which thereby gives us the impression of choice)[169] and hide the fact that there are other fields of possibility (which conceals the fact that our way of being is only one way of being among many). Therefore, ordinary thinking misses the deeper point – the possibilities that appear to us *as* possibilities are grounded by the possibilities that have been cleared away (*i.e.,* what is not possible).[170]

How, then, do we disrupt the fixity of our ordinary thinking? One way, argues Heidegger, is through the work of art.[171] In "The Origin of the Work of Art" Heidegger contends the artwork discloses that there is something hidden by the network of significance; there *is* something that withdraws from the world – Heidegger calls this withdrawal from world, earth.[172] World is a network of useful relations in which things are limited to instrumentality.[173] Earth, by contrast, is

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[169] The question of choice can only really appear when the truth of real possibilities (that they arise from a deeper ground of concealment and receding possibility) is understood. I will delve into the question of choice in the following chapters.

[170] Heidegger writes: "Concealing denial is intended to denote that opposition in the essence of truth which subsists between clearing and concealing. It is the opposition of the original strife. The essence of truth is, in itself, the primal strife in which that open center is won within which beings stand and from which they set themselves back into themselves." (OWA 180)

[171] My goal is not to offer an exhaustive account of Heidegger's discussion of the work of art, but rather to motivate our discussion of the 'not' by using concrete examples from within Heidegger's philosophy.

[172] Heidegger writes: "[Art] illuminates also that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the *earth*. What this word says is not to be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere, or with the merely astronomical idea of a planet. Earth is that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises as such. In the things that arise, earth occurs essentially as the sheltering agent." (OWA 168)

[173] Heidegger discusses jug, ax, shoes as examples and contends that the "interfusion of form and matter prevailing... [is] controlled beforehand by the purposes served by jug, as, shoes." (OWA 154)

that which recedes from the instrumental network of worldly relations.[174] The gap between earth and world is therefore another way to understand the ontological difference – what appears meaningful is subtended by what refuses appearance and meaning. Artworks reveal that there *is* a difference and therefore, open the possibility of thinking the 'not'.[175]

Earth is not raw material, however.[176] To explore the topic, let us appropriate Heidegger's well-known example and suppose the following: we would not make a hammer out of glass.[177] The material of the hammer – the smooth wood handle and the heavy metal head – is inconspicuous and has a worldly character. The material is appropriate to the use of the hammer, and, in a fitting manner, the use of the hammer appropriates the usefulness of the wood and metal. The crucial point is that the material of the hammer *is also part of the network of useful relations* and deployed by the world within which it is granted significance.[178] In short, the material of equipment *is equipment*. Remark, however, that the fact that *some* material is

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[174] Heidegger contends that "in its genuinely equipmental being, equipment stems from a more distant source. Matter and form and their distinction have a deeper origin." (OWA 160-161)

[175] Heidegger writes: "Earth just through the world and world grounds itself on the earth only so far as truth happens as the primal strife between clearing and concealing. But how does this happen? We answer: it happens in a few essential ways. One of these ways in which truth happens is the work-being of the work. Setting up a world and setting forth the earth, the work is the instigation of the strife in which the unconcealment of beings as a whole, or truth, is won." (OWA 180)

[176] As Heidegger describes: "This equipment belongs to the *earth*, and it is protected in the world." (OWA 160)

[177] Heidegger writes: "Usefulness is the basic feature from which this being regards us, that is, flashes at us and thereby is present and thus is this being. Both the formative act and the choice of material – a choice given with the act – and therewith the dominance of the conjunction of matter and form, are all grounded in such usefulness. A being that falls under usefulness is always the product of a process of making. It is made as a piece of equipment for something. As determinations of beings, accordingly, matter and form have their proper place in the essential nature of equipment. This name designates what is produced expressly for employment and use. Matter and form are in no case original determinations of the thingness of the mere thing." (OWA 154)

[178] OWA 154-155

appropriate for *certain* equipment (*e.g.*, as wood and metal are suitable for hammers while glass

is not) and the fact that *some* equipment is suitable for *certain* tasks (*e.g.*, as hammers are

appropriate for hammering nails while teacups are not) shows us that some things are appropriate

while others things are inappropriate; in other words, it shows us that appropriation appears as a

possibility given the circumscription of other (sometimes inappropriate) possibilities.

Appropriation is a possibility given the concealment of other possibility. To push the issue

deeper, beneath equipment, that is to say, subtending or grounding the world, is something more

fundamental. The fact that there *is* a world (within which equipment is appropriated all the time)

shows us that there is something presupposed by (and refusing, and withdrawing from) the

appearance of the world – this is earth. Earth recedes from the worldly character of equipment

(which means it also recedes from the equipmental material of equipment). Earth, therefore, is

not the world. It is, for lack of a better term, the non-worlded. The non-worlded earth withdraws

from all attempts of interpretation and determination – it refuses to be mastered. As Heidegger

writes, "Earth thus shatters every attempt to penetrate it."[179] In other words, the definite

possibility of the world and the determinable uses of equipment are grounded in the

unmasterable, indefinite, non-determinable earth. Or again, appropriation is granted from the

refusal of appropriation. In short, the world is preserved by the vanishing of earth.[180] Thus, earth

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[179] OWA 172

[180] In the following passage, Heidegger describes the Greek temple as it discloses (the network of significance of) the world as grounded in the withdrawal of earth: "Standing there, the building rests on the rocky ground. This resting of the work draws up out of the rock the obscurity of that rock's bulky yet spontaneous support. Standing there, the building holds its ground against the storm raging aboive it and so first makes the storm itself manifest in its violence. The luster and gleam of the stone, though itself apparently glowing only by the grace of the sun, first brings to radiance the light of the day, the breadth of the sy, the darkness of the night. The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of air. The steadfastness of the work contrasts with the surge of the surf, and its

cannot be material (raw or equipmental), a point illustrated by the simple observation that we would not make a hammer out of glass.

Three questions emerge from the present investigation. First, how does the artwork reveal the concealment of earth? Second, why does the concept of earth disrupt the fixity of ordinary thinking? Third, why should we think of art phenomenologically? In the first instance, artworks hold open the world in a special way that seems mostly unavailable to us in everyday activity.[181] The opening of the work of art clears a space for us to engage with the meaning process in ways otherwise concealed by average life.[182] In short, art opens the world in a way that reveals there is something more than world.[183] It does so by disrupting our average everyday way of relating to the world such that averageness, everydayness, and the facticity of the network of relations are

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own repose brings out the raging of the sea. Tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are." (OWA 168)

[181] As Heidegger writes: "To be a work means to set up a world." (OWA 170). To be a work means to reveal world. As Otto Pöggeler writes: "The origin of the work of art is the truth as it occurs primordially… The work opens the truth and preserves it in unique openness. Truth is the open place which the work of art in beings as a whole breaks opn, that clearing in which nonhuman as well as human beings can first be the beings which they are. Yet this clearing happens only on the basis of concealment. Art places a being into its openness in that, at the same time, it places it back into the inexhaustibility in which a being hides itself." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 171)

[182] Pöggeler describes the primordiality of concealment: "In the unconcealment the concealment holds sway not only as the non-essence, the sefl-refusal of truth, but also as the counter-essence of the disguise in which the one being disguises the other and beings generally disguise Being. Amidst the familiar and common, art wrenches open the space for the uncanny and thus lets every celaring and revealing shatter on the concealment. Truth as it occurs at times as art is unconcealment. Nothing belongs to it as that which holds sway, as concealment and "veil," as the heart and the mystery of unconcealment." (Ibid.,171)

[183] As Christopher Fynsk describes, the "throw of the work's projection of truth… transports the receiver into the breach of the openness of beings as it withdraws into this same space" (139). On the next page, he continues, the "work's thrust comes as a pull… [a] *space* that opens in this "multiple throw"" (140). (Christopher Fynsk, *Heidegger: Thought and Historicity* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1986)).

revealed.[184] The concept can be thought in terms of equipment. In our everyday dealings with

things, the handiness of equipment is inconspicuous – this is an essential part of the average

everyday way of life. Even when equipment breaks down, the equipmentality of the object

remains inconspicuous inasmuch as some other equipment seamlessly takes its place. The point

is that all things are understood in terms of their relation to other things.[185] The artwork,

however, gives us another access to the world.[186] The shoes represented in Van Gogh's painting

reveals the world of the peasant as well as the withdrawal of something more than the peasant's

world – the withdrawal of earth.[187] Importantly, the painting shows us that there is a concealed

passivity underlying being from which being arises, a deeper level of being which withdraws

from all description.[188] It gives us another way to experience the world and therefore, it discloses

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[184] As Julian Young writes, art "disrupts… forgetfulness." (Julian Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 41)

[185] Heidegger writes: "The world is not the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar things that are at hand. But neither is it a merely imagined framework added by our representation to the sum of such given things. The *world worlds*, and is more fully in being that the tangible and perceptible realm in which we believe ourselves to be at home. World is never an object that stands before us and can be seen. World is the ever-nonobjective to which we are subject as long as the paths of brith and death, blessing and curse keep us transported into Being. Wherever those utterly essential decisions of our history are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, go unrecognized and are rediscovered by new inquiry, there the world worlds." (OWA 170)

[186] From a different perspective, the material used in artworks *is part of the artwork*. Unlike equipment where the material is itself equipment, the material of the artwork is *an essential part of the being of the artwork*. The material of artworks is disclosed *as* material, which also opens up the possibility of showing earth and world. The materiality of the artwork is not concealed by the art object (by contrast, material is always concealed by a functioning equipment object). The paint on the wall of a building, for example, is part of the equipmentality of the wall and is itself equipment. The paint in Van Gogh's painting, on the other hand, is given expression. The paint *is shown as paint* and signifies the artist who painted and the world from which it is distinguished and to which it refers. Through the painting, we glimpse at earth – that which refuses the world and resists its instrumentality. As Heidegger describes, "the sculptor uses stone just as the mason uses it, in his own way. But he does not use it up." (OWA 173)

[187] OWA 159

[188] Heidegger describes the encounter with unconcealment opened by Van Gogh's painting: "From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth. In the

another part of the basic character of the world.[189] Through the work of art, we realize *there is a world*, and there is something *more* than just what the world shows us. We become aware of concealment – hence, earth and the 'not' is echoed in the artwork.[190]

Second, Heidegger contends that the world attempts to use up the earth, it instrumentalizes earth forcing it to recede from its ultimate appropriation by the world.[191] In this way, earth and world are in tension with one another; they oppose each other in strife.[192]

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stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is the accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by a raw wind. On the leather lie the dampness and richness of the soil. Under the soles stretches the loneliness of the field-path as evening falls. In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field. This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining worry as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, the trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death. This equipment belongs to the *earth*, and it is protected in the *world* of the peasant woman. From out of this protected belonging the equipment itself rises to its resting-within-itself." (OWA 159-160)

[189] As Young describes: "The artwork, then, by bringing forth its world to clear and commanding salience allows an inauthentic society, one that is either not yet or no longer a people, to become or become once more… a people. Its importance does not, however, lie merely in the creation or recreation of a people. It is important, too, because it *preserves* what it has created." (Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, 57)

[190] Pöggeler puts it in the following way: "The structure of the truth as unconcealment is the togetherness of world and earth. World is the articulation of the open, the clearing, earth the articulation of the self-closing, of the concealment as the sheltering. World is never without earth. It is not simply the clearing, but rather the clearing which comes forth from concealment. Earth is not earth without world. It is not the utterly closed up, but rather the self-closing and concealing which holds itself into the openness and shelters this in itself. World is grounded upon earth, earth cuts through world. The with-and-against-one another of earth and world is "strife"; nonetheless this strife is only insofar as truth occurs as the original strife of clearing and concealment. The work of art kindles this strife and lets this strife attain its movement from the work's unique resting in itself." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 172)

[191] Heidegger writes: "Upon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world. In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth. This setting forth must be thought here in the strict sense of the word. The work moves the earth itself into the open region of a world and keeps it there. *The work lets the earth be an earth*." (OWA 172)

[192] Heidegger writes: "The opposition of world and earth is strife. But we would surely all too easily falsify its essence if we were to confound strife with discord and dispute, and thus see it only as disorder and destruction. In essential strife, rather, the opponents raise each other into the self-assertion of their essential nature. Self-assertion of

However, the strife is not a combative relation – on the contrary, the strife is a necessary tension from where both earth and world are brought into being. As one critic describes the relation, "an *event* occurs only through the participation of the self in a play of this unmasterable possibility (*Seyn*), experienced as a differentiation of what-is and what-is-not that is constantly happening to me, producing actuality while always tacitly retreating within it."[193] The strife, contends Heidegger, is hidden and disappears from view in ordinary life.[194] Everyday life presses into average possibilities while concealing other possibilities such that the fixity of this way of life is difficult to disrupt. Art, however, offers us the opportunity to disrupt our ordinary ways of thinking. It reveals that life happens to us all the time; that the meaning process is something in which we are thrown. Certainly, all human activity is revealing and concealing. Art, however, is different insofar as it explicitly expresses that there is concealment *as such* and therefore, it allows concealment to be itself for the first time. Another way to put it is, art gives us space from everyday existence so that existence *as it is* can appear to us *as it is*. From yet another perspective, art reveals difference *as* difference – that there *is* a difference between the world that appears and the non-worlded that disappears.[195] Or more succinctly, art reveals its own concealment. Therefore, art opens the possibility of thinking the 'not'.

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essence, however, is never a rigid insistence upon some contingent state, but surrender to be concealed originality of the provenance of one's own Being. In strife, each opponent carries the other beyond itself. Thus the strife becomes ever more intense as striving, and more properly what it is." (OWA 174)

[193] Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 39.

[194] Heidegger writes: "The more strife, for its part, outdoes itself, the more inflexibly do the opponents let themselves go into the intimacy of simple belonging to one another." (OWA 174)

[195] Heidegger writes: "Truth is un-truth, insofar as there belongs to it the reservoir of the not-yet-revealed, the un-uncovered, in the sense of concealment. In unconcealment, as truth, there occurs also the other "un-" of a double restraint or refusal. Truth essentially occurs as such in the opposition of clearing and double concealing. Truth is the

An interesting parallel can be made here between the disclosure of art and the disclosure of death.[196] Although we have not yet explored the issue, Heidegger's discussion of being-towards-death is a topic I will introduce here and investigate more deeply in the following chapter especially as it pertains to the call of conscience. Art, like death, reveals the gap of the 'not' – the difference between what *is* and what is *not*, or the relation between appearance and disappearance. Both art and death summon us back to the truth of being, a call over which we have no control and to which we are passively delivered – we are called back from lostness such that we remember our forgetfulness. In the authentic encounter with art and being-towards-death, we encounter our flight from truth, and face the untruthfulness of the truth of our being – we are *not* what we are, we are *not* what we should be, we are forgotten, lost, self-evading, passive beings, we are finite, and as such, we are self-transcending beings of possibility. Just as the authentic encounter with death is the utmost possibility of Dasein (inasmuch as it reveals the possibility of the transcendence of Dasein), the authentic encounter with art is the utmost

primal strife in which, always in some particular way, the open region is won within which everything stands and from which everything withholds itself that shows itself and withdraws itself as a being. Whenever and however this strife breaks out and happens, the opponents, clearing and concealing, move apart because of it. Thus the open region of the place of strife is won. The openness of this open region, that is, truth, can be what it is, namely, *this* openness, only if and as long as it establishes itself within its open region. Hence there must always be some being in this open region in which the openness takes its stand and attains its constancy. In thus taking possession of the open region, openness holds it open and sustains it. Setting and taking possession are here everywhere drawn from the Greek sense of *thesis*, which means a setting up in the unconcealed." (OWA 185-186)

[196] Julian Young suggests such a reading: "By the itme of 'The Origin' two changes have occurred in Heidegger's thinking. First, his focus has shifted from the authenticity of indidividual to that of collective Dasein. Second, the agent of this is no longer 'being towards death' but rather the artwork. In spite of these changes, however, the account of Dasein's becoming authentic – becoming the 'people' that it potentially is – is, in the collective case, structurally identical to that given in the individual case. Thus collective Dasein's authenticity is a matter of, first of all, its actively remembering, appropriating, its heritage – 'entering into its endowment'." (Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, 54) Young continues his argument: "*Being and Time* itself has no account of how this shared commitment comes about. But 'The Origin' fills this gap by telling us that it is the artwork which makes shared commitment possible. It is the artwork, therefore, which makes authentic communicty, makes a 'people' possible." (55)

possibility of being (inasmuch as it reveals the possibility of the transcendence of being). We can therefore suppose that art for Heidegger is not simply (another contingent) part of the network of relations. Rather, as it opens the possibility of a collective-being-towards-death, art is a fundamental part of historical being – it *is*, like death, an essential part of what we are. In a technological world where all things have their place and use, where otherness is forgotten and the sway of the standing reserve is unbridled, the authentic encounter with art is concealed and thus, being is *not* what it *is*. To be what it *is* (which includes what it is *not*), being *must* reveal its concealment – art *must* therefore be freed to open the possibility of an authentic encounter with being.

This leads us to our third question, why should we think of art phenomenologically? Why think of art as the disclosure of earth and world? Why not think of art as we ordinarily do, in effect, as an aesthetic object? In a sense, the third question concerns the *relation* between the disclosure of the concealment of earth (my first question) and the disruption of ordinary thinking (my second question). Heidegger's example of the Greek temple connects the disclosure of earth to an authentic (and decidedly non-aesthetic) encounter with art, which furthermore relates to the problem of transcendence. In contrast to the aesthetic encounter with art (an encounter that assumes there are simply subjects and aesthetic principles that presuppose nothing), Heidegger describes the reawakening of an Ancient Greek understanding of the philosophy of art, where art opens the possibility of self-understanding by revealing being *as such*. The Greek temple, for example, discloses what is meaningful and how things are meaningful to the world of the

Ancient Greeks.[197] Put otherwise, the temple clears the possibility of understanding the facticity of existence. The Greek temple not only organizes and unifies a way of being, but it also reveals its organizing and unifying character. It shows itself as appropriating existence and, more fundamentally, as being appropriated by the meaning process. In this way, the Greek temple reveals (the contingency of) existence as historically situated, and discloses history as a self-preserving process of appropriation. The Greek temple thus discloses its deployment *by* the happening of being *for* the preservation of being. More simply, the temple is both of world and earth. The reason we should think of art phenomenologically, the reason we should reawaken an authentic encounter with art is because, as one critic puts it, "[a] work of art might still help to gather a new historical world around itself by focusing and illuminating an understanding of being that does not reduce entities either to modern objects to be controlled or to late-modern resources to be optimized."[198] We should destruct the history of aesthetics such that a new way of thinking about art (and likewise being) is freed, a way that thinks art (and being) *as it is* – as it is grounded in the strife between world and earth, founded in the self-transcending relation of the ontological difference between what (being) *is* and what (being) is *not*.[199] Regardless of what the

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[197] Heidegger describes the Greek temple as disclosing earth and world: "A building, a Greek temple, portrays nothing. It simply stands there in the middle of the rock-cleft valley. The building encloses the figure of the god, and in this concealment lets it stand out into the holy precinct through the open portico. By means of the temple, the god is present in the temple. This presence of the god is in itself the extension and delimitation of the precinct as a holy precinct. The temple and its precinct, however, do not fade away into the indefinite. It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people. Only from and in this expanse does the nation first return to itself for the fulfillment of its vocation." (OWA 167)

[198] Iain D. Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67.

[199] Julian Young makes an even stronger argument regarding the normativity of the (great) work of art: "In and around the temple passage, however, Heidegger's presentation of world seems to be focused not on ontology but rather on ethics; not on what *is* but rather on what *ought to be* the case… In general when the artwork opens up our

new way may be, the new or *other* way will at least show us that *our* way of thought *is* a way (a fact hidden by the fixity of our ordinary ways of thinking), and furthermore, that the self-concealment of our ordinary way of thought is a basic character of our being. An authentic, phenomenological encounter with art thus opens the possibility of thinking being *as such* – art clears the path for the transcendence of being.

Section 3.2.2: Technology – why disrupt ordinary thinking?

Another way to look at concealment is in terms of Heidegger's discussion of technology and the way technology conceals its own nature.[200] As Heidegger suggests in "The Question Concerning Technology", technology conceals concealment. Heidegger contends that enframing is the essence of technology; it conceals the nature of technology and yet reveals existence in another way – enframing reveals being as active and driven, it reveals a masterful being who takes control of its environment, wills things to happen, and actualizes the possibilities set out by its technological comportment.[201] At the same time, however, the revealing is deceptive. The very transformability and productivity so crucial to technology assumes that beings are simply available for use, and that this usefulness and availability (as well as the very notion of a simple

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world for us we understand… [what constitutes] for us, the proper way to live, our, as I shall call it, fundamental *ethos*." (Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, 24)

[200] What follows is intended to continue motivating the discussion concerning concealment and the 'not', and is not meant to be a thorough study of Heidegger on technology. My discussion is based primarily on "The Question Concerning Technology".

[201] Heidegger describes the being of technology: "Everwhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has it own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [*Bestand*]. The word expresses here something more, and something more essential, than mere "stock." The word "standing-reserve" assumes the rank of an inclusive rubric. It designates nothing less than the way in which everything presences that is wrought upon by the revealing that challenges. Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object." (QCT 322)

being) presuppose nothing. One critic describes this "notion of [a] pre-existing, positing being, understood as ontologically pre-individuated" as a form of naïve realism.[202] Another way to put it is to say that the idea of the progress of technology assumes the self-evidence of the meaning and value of progress (and likewise of technology).[203] Progress and functionality are in fact treated synonymously by technology – what is functional is progress, what is progressive is functional. Hidden by the circle of technological reasoning are *other* ways of thinking and *other* ways of being, which includes (reflecting on) the detrimental aspects of technology (a thought that can*not* be understood by technology and yet *is* nevertheless a fundamental part of its being). The self-evidence of progress is thus an extension of the self-evidence of technology – in a technological world without gaps, there is no space for self-understanding or self-questioning.[204]

To break the point down further, enframing conceals a more basic characteristic of being in at least two ways.[205] First, enframing conceals the fact that being is technologically oriented –

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[202] Macdonald, "What Is, Is More Than It Is," 38.

[203] Michael E. Zimmerman succinctly describes the concealment of the self-evidence of progress as he reflects on a slogan used by a major U.S. corporation, "Progress is our most important product.": "What is revealed here is an image of the human community working together on projects that will benefit the whole species. What is concealed becoems clear only when we ask such questions as: Progress for whom? At whose expense?" (Michael E. Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 215)

[204] Michael E. Zimmerman is clear about the detriment of technology: "Modern technology was for Heidegger the greatest danger for humanity, not because industrial technology threatens to destroy the biosphere, but rather because technology reduces humanity to the status of a clever animal with no insight into its own authentic possibility and obligation: to disclose things and to shelter their being." (Ibid., 221)

[205] Heidegger describes enframing in the following way: "Enframing is the gathering together which belongs to that setting-upon which challenges man and puts him in position to reveal the actual, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. As the one who is challenged forth in this way, man stands within the essential realm of enframing. He can never take up a relationship to it only subsequently. Thus the question as to how we are to arrive at a relationship to the essence of technology, asked in this way, always comes too late. But never too late comes the question as to whether we actually experience ourselves as the ones whose activities everywhere, public and private, are challenged forth by enframing. Above all, never too late comes the question as to whether and how we actually admit ourselves into that wherein enframing itself essentially unfolds." (QCT 329)

the technologization of the world reveals itself as *the way of being* rather than *a way of being*. It takes its truthfulness for granted and therefore does not recognize other ways of being.[206] Second, enframing not only conceals other ways of being, but it also conceals non-being, which is an important part of the reason that technology takes itself to be self-determining and willful. In the second type of concealment, technology presents a false reality of control – a reality from which the *rightness* or *truthfulness* of the first type of concealment arises (*i.e.,* because technology makes life appear in control and efficient, all possibilities that seem out of control or inefficient are considered deficient ways of being).[207] The false reality of control portrayed by enframing conceals the passivity with which we are actually involved in the essence of technology. *We do not decide to be technological, or to comport ourselves towards the world with an obsessive eye toward efficiency, or to relate to the world as a standing-reserve.*[208]

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[206] Heidegger writes: "As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but exclusively as standing-reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the ordered of the standing-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve." (QCT 332)

[207] Heidegger writes: As standing-reserve, "man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself and postures as lord of the earth. In this way the illusion comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct. This illusion gives rise in turn to one final delusion: it seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself." (QCT 332)

[208] Heidegger writes: "Thus the challenging-enframing not only conceals a former way of revealing (bringing-forth) but also conceals revealing itself and with it that wherein unconcealment, i.e., truth, propriates. Enframing blocks the shining-forth and holding sway of truth. The destining that sends into ordering is consequently the extreme danger. What is dangerous is not technology. Technology is not demonic; but its essence is mysterious. The essence of technology, as a destining of revealing, is the danger. The transformed meaning of the word "enframing" will perhaps become somewhat more familiar to us now if we think enframing in the sense of destining and danger." (QCT 333)

Rather, we are thrown into this legacy – this is our destiny and the fate of the modern age within which we live.[209] We are structured to lose ourselves in the handiness of everyday relations. We are historically determined by the technological comportment of being, which arises from the way being has been historically understood. History itself has become technologized insofar as we understand ourselves from a causal perspective. We write our storied past from the perspective of enframing. We are therefore authors and characters in the story (or history) of technology, or more precisely, the technologization of being.[210] Technology allows us to see some things clearly, to understand the world in particular ways; technology clears possibility, and yet it clears in an absolute way such that no other path of thought, no other

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[209] Heidegger writes: "As the essencing of technology, enframing is what endures. Does enframing hold sway at all in the sense of granting? No doubt the question seems a horrendous blunder. For according to everything that has been said, enframing is rather a destining that gathers together into the revealing that challenges forth. Challenging is anything but a granting. So it seems, so long as we do not notice that the challenging-forth into the ordering of the actual as standing-reserve remains a destining that starts man upon a way of revealing. As this destining, the essential unfolding of technology gives man entry into something which, of himself, he can neither invent nor in any way make. For there is no such thing as a man who exists singly and solely on his own." (QCT 336-337)

[210] Heidegger writes: "The essence of modern technology starts man upon the way of that revealing through which the actual everywhere, more or less distinctly, becomes standing-reserve. "To start upon a way" means "to send" in our ordinary language. We shall call the sending that gathers [*versammelnde Schicken*], that first starts man upon a way of revealing, *destining* [*Geschick*]. It is from this destining that the essence of all history [*Geschichte*] is determined. History is neither simply the object of written chronicle nor merely the process of human activity. That activity first becomes history as something destined. And it is only the destining into objectifying representation that makes the historical accessible as an object for historiography, i.e., for a science, and on this basis makes possible the current equating of the historical with that which is chronicled." (QCT 329)

understanding can appear.[211] Technology conceals its own concealment. Heidegger shows us the

crucial connection between technology and art: what technology conceals, art can reveal.[212]

This, in a sense, is what is really at stake in our discussion of the 'not'. The 'not' is our

recourse against what Heidegger discusses as the standing reserve – when life is lived and

entirely thought in terms of efficiency, usefulness, and by its potential to be instrumentalized.[213]

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[211] Heidegger writes: "The essential unfolding of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealment of standing-reserve. Human activity can never directly counter this danger. Human achievement alone can never banish it. But human reflection can ponder the fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered, though at the same time kindred to it." (QCT 339)

[212] Heidegger writes: "Because the essence of technology is nothing technological, essential reflection upon technology and decisive confrontation with it must happen in a realm that is, on the one hand, akin to the essence of technology and, on the other, fundamentally different from it. Such a realm is art." (QCT 340) Yet, as Heidegger suggests at the end of the "The Question Concerning Technology", technology can too "unfold essentially in the propriative event of truth." (QCT 340) On the topic, Michael E. Zimmerman remarks: "The highest form of *techne* is the work of art, which – as we have seen – founds a world wherein things may present themselves in a particular way. In the postwar years, Heidegger suggested that the work of art could refine our ontological understanding in such a way that we could learn to "free" things from their captivity in the matrix of instrumental dealings associated with the industrialism spawned by productionist metaphysics. In what may be regarded as an attempt to move beyond the anthropocentrism associated with his claim about the saving power of art, Heidegger went so far as to say that virtually *any* thing could play the world-gathering role formerly assigned primarily to the work of art." (Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, 223) Zimmerman concludes the argument on technology stating "because there is no rational basis for the technological way of life, things *could be otherwise*. Discovering the groundlessness of the technological era makes possible the openness – and the anxiety – necessary for the arrival of a new, post-modern era." (236)

[213] Pöggeler writes: "In the enframing of technology the Being of beings is presentability and deliverability, the disposability of the reserve; what presences in Being, the respective occurring of the unconcealedness which is not at one's disposal, remains forgotten. In enframing, Being withdraws from the truth of its essence, holds world back, and hands beings over to neglect. World (in the genuine sense of the word) is, in contrast, the preserve of the essence of Being, the structural fitting-together of unconcealment and the preserving of the being as "thing."" (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 198) Further along, Pöggeler describes the pervasiveness of enframing as it conceals possibilities from man: "In the face of clamorous technology he experiences nothing of the essence of technology. He appears, as Heisenberg said, to encounter only himself, while it is precisely himself and his essence to be used for the appropriative event of unconcealment that he no longer encounters. The unconcealment which holds sway as enframing disguises the essence of man and its own essence insofar as it lets revealing be only as a challenging forth and a setting upon; yet even enframing cannot be experienced according to its essence through challenging forth and setting upon. Enframing also disguises all other ways that unconcealment can hold sway when it lets revealing be an ordering." (199)

The technological way of life has us believe it is the only way and that it *is* a masterful way. The 'not', however, shows us that there are other ways. It shows us that there are other possibilities than those that appear to as our only possibilities. It reveals that there is a play of possibilities cleared away by our current situation. Most importantly, thinking the 'not' disrupts the fixity of our ordinary thinking such that we *can* imagine that possibilities are not fixed. The 'not' therefore shows us that there are other ways of thinking and being.

Conclusion:

The goal of the chapter was to investigate the later Heidegger's discussion of *Ereignis* in order to establish a context from which I can continue exploring my path of reading the earlier Heidegger. I discovered that *Ereignis* is a conjuncture in which existence concurrently shows itself and hides itself. The event of being happens to us in a way that allows us to express ourselves, and yet, the expression arises from a ground that we ultimately cannot control or master. *Ereignis* reveals a fundamental passivity from which life is lived. Part of our examination of *Ereignis* included an exploration of the nature of the clearing and what appears and disappears in the opening of the clearing. The clearing de-densifies possibility such that real possibility can appear and be actualized; in this way, the clearing is one way to understand *Ereignis*. What is possible for me is only partly due to the network of regional significations from which I pick out and actualize possibilities. The network of possibilities appears because it has been circumscribed beforehand by the clearing, which de-densifies the world such that the world can appear in a way that matters. My path of investigation then led me to that which disappears in the clearing, to what is not possible. I found that what is not possible can be understood concretely in a few ways – in terms of alternatives to real possibilities, in terms of possibilities not actualized,

and in terms of possibilities not yet actualized. Yet, the deepest level of possibility, the ground

upon which possibility as such arises, cannot be thought concretely as it continually withdraws

from concrete description. Rather, the 'not' as such must be sought in specific modalities

wherein ordinary thinking is disrupted, modalities such as the work of art. Through an

investigation of the work of art, I showed that the 'not' is fundamentally concealed, and its

unconcealment is necessary for life to avoid the totalizing effects of technology. From a

(transcendent) reading such as mine, we able to think about what is hidden, and as such, the

possibility of thinking about the meaning of 'meaning' in terms of transcendence appears. The

path thus far has allowed us to explore and take issue with the deepest level of the problem of

transcendence as it relates to the 'not' – the relation between what *is* and *is not*.

Nevertheless, my primary interest is in how the early Heidegger determines the problem

of transcendence. How does the problem of transcendence of the later Heidegger help us disclose

how the early Heidegger understands the same problem? In the next chapter, I will investigate

the problem of transcendence as it appears in Heidegger's early works. I will especially examine

his discussion of the 'not' and the nullity, and the normativity of conscience such that we can

understand the difference between what we can do and what we must do.[214] Moreover, I will

continue to think about the possibilities that are not possible as an essential part of the

transcendence of being.

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[214] In particular, I will use essays by Simon Critchley (Simon Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity, or between two nothings: Heidegger's uncanniness" in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 69-78 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011) and Iain Macdonald (Iain Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity: Conscience and Non-Identity in Heidegger and Adorno, with a Glance at Hegel" in *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions*, ed. Iain Macdonald and Krzysztof Ziarek, 6-21 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008) to guide my investigation into Heidegger's discussion of the (ontological) normativity of the call of conscience especially as it is discussed in *Being and Time*.

3   *Why I Should Be What I'm not*

Introduction:

In the present chapter, I will push further into my path of reading of the early Heidegger and especially of the Heidegger of *Being and Time* by delving into a topic introduced at the end of the last section, namely, the question concerning normativity – that is, the question of what we *must* and *should* do. Looking back over the process thus far, the first chapter showed that Heidegger's discussion of meaning in *Being and Time* involves a transcendent process of revealing and concealing. Meaning is revealed in the process of humans pressing into the possibilities granted by the mattering world, a world in which they always find themselves. I demonstrated in the second chapter that the later Heidegger describes the transcendent process of meaning as *Ereignis* – a fundamental happening or event in which existence is appropriated by (the meaning process of) history. *Ereignis* also grants possibilities alongside the concealment of others. Put in other words, we can pick out possibilities *as* possibilities because the event of life concurrently *clears away* or conceals non-determinable, undifferentiated possibility, and *makes clear* or reveals real possibilities. The possibility of meaning arises from the 'not' – the unmasterable withdrawal of possibility. I also discovered that the withdrawal of possibility, the 'not' *as such*, participates in the disruption of the leveling down of the public and the averageness of everyday thinking. Reflecting on the 'not' of the life process – what is not, not yet, cannot and may never be – clears the necessary space for the stasis of ordinary thinking (and being) to be disrupted. As Heidegger argues, the 'not' is necessary for the transcendence of being, and the transcendence of being is necessary for meaning to be freed from the history of

misconception, and most primordially of all, the 'not' is a basic character of possibility and existence. Thus, inasmuch as we are (necessarily) what we are *not*, we *must* disclose the 'not'. At the end of the previous chapter, I therefore arrived at one way to understand Heidegger's notion of normativity. To be clear, then, the goal of the present chapter is to clarify the basic character of normativity in the early Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

Why am I interested in normativity and how does it relate to my thesis on the problem of transcendence? It is interesting to note that thus far, transcendence has been revealed as something we always already *are* and *do*. That is to say, we are transcendent inasmuch as we are passively *and* actively pressing into possibilities granted from the average everyday world. Therefore, transcendence occurs despite us and despite our understanding it – it is something we *must* do. That is not, however, the only level of transcendence discussed by Heidegger. There is also the possibility of the transcendence of Dasein – the choice and freedom to choose the mineness of death and thereby the differentiation of existence. The choice to choose ourselves is also arguably something we *must* do (although the nature of the 'must' in this case is debatable, what is not debatable is that when the possibility to differentiate our average everydayness appears, we *must* respond in some manner). Moreover, we discovered in the later Heidegger that the 'not' gave us a clue to the fact that something else exists other than what appears in our present possibilities; the 'not' hints at the possibility of another beginning to the history of philosophy (and therefore, to history *as such*), a beginning we *must* reveal to unearth freedom.[1] The crucial point is that at every level of transcendence, there is a corresponding level of

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[1] As Heidegger already intimates in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, transcendence is not that towards which I overstep, but rather "the *genuine ontological sense of transcendence* [is]... *that which oversteps as such*." (BPP 299/ GP 424-425)

normativity. What we *must* do, however, has different implications depending on the level of primordiality (*i.e.,* existentiell, ontic, existential, ontological, or historical) within which it occurs, and every level of primordiality has its own character of transcendence. Thus, the question concerning normativity is inextricably bound to the problem of transcendence in Heidegger.

Of the different ways normativity can be discussed, I am most interested in how (ontological) normativity intersects with the (fundamental) problem of transcendence in Heidegger's early works. In this way, the discussion of normativity in the present chapter aims to help clarify my thesis, indeed, how the early Heidegger determines the problem of transcendence and how it relates to the meaning of being. To accomplish the task, the chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I will continue to explore my path of reading of Heidegger by first investigating the pragmatist interpretation of normativity in the early Heidegger. I will discover that many pragmatist critics tend to focus on the normativity of the average everyday and the levelling down of the public.[2] The question of choice, however, subtly divides the group between those critics (such as Hubert Dreyfus and William Blattner)[3] who suggest functionality and efficient human practice determine normativity (*i.e.,* if it is practical, it should be done), and those critics (such as Mark Wrathall and Beatrice Han-Pile)[4] who propose that normativity exists

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[2] As Heidegger writes, "The "*they*", which supplies the answer to the question of the "*who*" of everyday Dasein, is the "*nobody*" to whom every Dasein has already surrendered itself in Being-among-one-other [Untereinandersein]." (BT 165-166/SZ 128)

[3] Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology and politics," 289-316; Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*.

[4] Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*; Beatrice Han-Pile, "Freedom and the "Choice to Choose Oneself" in *Being and Time*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Being and Time*, ed. Mark. A Wrathall, 291-319 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

in passive and active-passive modes (*i.e.,* the normativity we *must* choose and the normativity we *should* choose).

In the second section, I will explore critics who argue that the pragmatist discussion concerning normativity conceals a deeper point: normativity appears from a basic passivity, and therefore, normativity *as such* or *fundamental normativity* – that is, what we must do given our ontological and historical situatedness, or in other words, what we *mus*t be given what we *are* and have *always* been – is *not* a choice. Rather, fundamental normativity is one way to understand the ontological difference between what we *are* and what we *are not*. In particular, I will investigate how leading commentators address the issue of the nullity and attempt to disclose the relation between the normativity of the average everyday, and a deeper level of normativity that subtends daily life. For the most part, the critics I will discuss argue that fundamental normativity transcends average everyday normativity and opens the possibility of freedom and choice.

Similar to my examination of *Ereignis*, I will discover that the 'not' [*das Nicht*] and the nothing [*Nichts*] motivate my investigation of normativity. In order to bring the issue more clearly into view, I will delve into Heidegger's lecture "What is Metaphysics?" in the third section and attempt to answer a few questions that formed over the course of our current chapter. My investigation will use the insight gained from my discussion of *Ereignis* in the previous chapter as a way to read and interpret the 'not' and the nothing from "What is Metaphysics?". My reading will reveal that the early Heidegger's discussions of the nothing can be interpreted as already attempting to disclose the happening of life as it is historically situated, and therefore, that the seeds to the later Heidegger's investigation into the transcendence of being are

discoverable in the early Heidegger's discussion of the problem of transcendence (especially as it appears in his examination of the transcendence of Dasein). In other words, the path to the other beginning of philosophy, a path marked by the destruction of the history of ontology, is pervasive in some form even in the early Heidegger. To recall once more my thesis in the context of the present chapter, *I will not only argue that transcendence is one way to understand the meaning of being* (Chapter 1)*, and that the essence of transcendence is possibility* (Chapter 2)*, but I will also argue that the possibility of transcendence first appears to us (i.e., to the individual) from the call of conscience – that is, from fundamental normativity – which is summoned from the non-determinable, undifferentiated, unmasterable ground of the 'not', a ground that echoes the nothing.*

Section 1: The pragmatist version of normativity (the public or what to do in the average everyday)

There are a few ways normativity is discussed and debated in the early Heidegger and in the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. For example, some critics focus on the question of how we should understand normativity in the early Heidegger.[5] Others argue that there is no normativity in Heidegger[6] and criticize him for his lack of pursuing questions concerning political action especially given the turbulent times within which he lived.[7] Furthermore, there are commentators who argue that Heidegger's lack of normativity has negative ethical implications,[8] and that ethics and not ontology is first philosophy. I will concentrate on the debate surrounding the first question, namely, how we should understand normativity in the early Heidegger especially as it

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[5] For example, critics such as Hubert Dreyfus and William Blattner argue that the norms of daily life affect a normative standard on human behaviour. Other critics such as Simon Critchley and Iain Macdonald argue that average everyday normativity arises from a deeper, more fundamental normativity, one disclosed by the call of conscience.

[6] For example, in *Negative Dialectics*, Theodor Adorno famously critiques Heidegger's ontology for re-inscribing metaphysical dualism (i.e. a dichotomy between a physical, for-itself world and a metaphysical, in-itself world). The problem as Adorno sees it is that, at best, Heidegger's ontology does not provide the necessary ground for real change, that is, for transcendence, and at worst, Heidegger reinforces a history of oppression and suffering by not clearly delineating a *right* way of being (i.e. by lacking clear and just normative guidelines). (Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005)

[7] Adorno, for one, is an example of such a critic. There are others, however, who take the opposite path and aruge that Heidegger's ontology *does* bear normativity within in, but one marked by the ideas of fascism. For example, in *The Heidegger Controversy* (Richard Wolin, *The Heidegger Controversy* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993), Richard Wolin raises important questions concerning how Heidegger should be read given his political affiliations and given proof from his personal life that his early fundamental ontology can be interpreted as suggesting National Socialist ideals.

[8] See, for example, Emmanuel Levinas's "Is Ontology Fundamental?". For an interesting Levinasian approach to deconstructive reading, see: Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

appears in *Being and Time* and the surrounding works,[9] and address the other branches of the

debate in a secondary manner – after all, the *implications* of normativity are contingent on the

answer to the question concerning how we understand normativity (if it *does* exist) in

Heidegger's early works.

Hubert Dreyfus's position concerning normativity in the early Heidegger is perhaps the

definitive argument for pragmatists insofar as it situates normativity at the level of average

everyday activity, that is, activity dictated by the leveling down of the public. Dreyfus contends

that the public informs us of what we should do, a claim that sets a standard for all other critics

to follow – what is otherwise discerned as pejorative and negative is construed as having a

positive function. In this case, the public is not Kierkegaard's public, but a necessary rule-

forming social condition from which we measure ourselves most of the time, a measurement that

allows us to move seamlessly through the crowd.[10] Therefore, whether a given critic perceives

normativity in the early Heidegger or not, they *must* take issue with Dreyfus' argument that the

normativity of the average everyday has a positive function. To be certain, Dreyfus' translation

of *das Man* as *the one* is telling. He argues that statements concerning what we do in *das Man*

imply normativity, therefore, the translation of the term should preserve the sense of normativity

apparent in the original German.[11] Everything we do in our daily lives implies normativity

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[9] In the present chapter, we will focus primarily on "What is Metaphysics?" in addition to *Being and Time*, but also refer (in this chapter and the next) to *The History of the Concept of Time*, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* and *The Essence of Reasons* (for a continued discussion of the ground of being).

[10] As Dreyfus writes, "Heidegger calls the customary or normal comportment that we acquire along with out general familiarity with things and people, "averageness"" (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 153).

[11] Dreyfus explains his translation of *das Man*: "To refer to the *normal* user, Heidegger coins the term *das Man*, which our translators [Maquarrie and Robinson] call "the They." This translation is misleading, however, since it suggests that *I* am distinguished from *them*, whereas Heidegger's whole point is that the equipment and roles of a

whether we are preserving the norm or trying to defy it;[12] even acts of defiance reinforce the rule – transgression guarantees the rule it transgresses.[13] As Heidegger writes:

> "Thus the "they" maintains itself factically in the averageness of that which belongs to it, of that which it regards as valid and that which it does not, and of that to which it grants success and that to which it denies it. In this averageness with which it prescribes what can and may be ventured... [e]very kind of priority gets noiseless suppressed."[14]

Indeed, Dreyfus argues that our pervasive coping and the meaningfulness of the world are sustained by the normativity of our average way of living.[15] In other words, the average way of life is the way we *should* be because it *preserves* efficiency and functionality. Without averageness and cultural practices, society would break down.[16] This is not to say that it is the *correct* or the *right* way. Dreyfus is clear when he explains that correctness and rightness are functions of practicality in the question concerning normativity.[17] There are many ways that we

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society are defined by norms that apply to *anyone*. But even, translating *das Man* by "we" or by "anyone" does not capture the normative character of the expression. *We* or *Anyone* might try to cheat the Internal Revenue Service, but still, *one* pays *one's* taxes. To preserve a feel for the appeal to normativity in statements about what one does and does not do, we must stay close to Heidegger's German and translate *das Man* by "the one."" (Ibid., 151-152)

[12] As Dreyfus succinctly puts it: "Only when there is some problem with the norms do I realize that I have all along been doing what one normally does." (Ibid., 153)

[13] See Georges Bataille, "Transgression," in *Eroticism* 63-70 (London: Marion Boyars, 1998).

[14] BT 165/SZ 127

[15] Dreyfus explains Heidegger's "original insight": "Remember that one does not understand a chair by standing on it, but by knowing how to sit on it or by knowing that it is normally used for sitting." (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 152).

[16] Dreyfus describes the positive function of the one [*das Man*] : "The one preserves averageness, which in turn is necessary for the functioning of the referential whole, and it is thanks to the one that there is a single shared public world rather than a plurality of individual owrlds." (Ibid., 154)

[17] As Dreyfus writes, "Norms and the averageness they sustain perform a crucial function. Without them the referential whole could not exist. In the West *one* east with a knife and fork; in the Far East *one* eats with chopsticks.

can be. The fact that there *must* be *one norm* or an *average* way to be does not so much *prove* the correctness of the norm, but rather it shows us that usability, intelligibility and sense-making drive human activity. Put simply, we tend toward the *best practice* inasmuch as the best practice is the average way of making sense of something. Dreyfus gives the example of eating with a knife and fork in the west versus eating with chopsticks in the east. The point is there is no *right* way to eat. Given cultural practices, given the referential whole of the cultural context, there is a *norm* and a *normative* standard reinforced by the average way of life.[18]

Moreover, Dreyfus contends that equipment also reveals the normativity of average life.[19] There is a generality to equipment, he argues. There is a *normal* and *average* way to use equipment. The average use of equipment is determined by the average way that it is used by the average user. Concurrently, the average user *uses* equipment in the average way given the average use – in that way too, the average user can be said to be determined by the average use of the equipment. The hermeneutic circle is clear – equipment and its users, world and the They,

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The important thing is that in each culture there are equipmental norms and thus an average way to do things. There *must be*, for without such averageness there could be no equipmental whole. It would not matter if each chimpanzee used a different stick in a different way to reach bananas, and, indeed, there is no "*right way*" to do it. But the functioning of the referential whole, everyone must (at least most of the time) eat the normal way. If some ate with forks, others with chopsticks, and still others used their right hands, the way food was cut up, and whether one got a washcloth with dinner, whether there was bread or rice, plates or bowls, etc. would be undecided and the whole equipmental nexus involved in cooking and eating a meal could not exist. For eating equipment to work, how *one* eats, when *one* eats, where *one* eats, what *one* eats, and what *one* eats with must be already determined. Thus the very functioning of equipment is dependent upon social norms. Indeed, norms define the in-order-tos that define the being of equipment, and also the for-the-sake-of-whichs that give equipment its significance." (Ibid., 153-154)

[18] Dreyfus makes a similar argument concerning standing distance in: Dreyfus, "Nihilism, art, technology, and politics," 294-295.

[19] As Dreyfus writes, "There are two important ways in which equipment is public. Equipment displays *generality* and obeys *norms*. First, a piece of equipment is the equipment it is no matter who uses it. Hammers, typewriters, and buses are not just for me to use but for others too. Equipment is for "Anybody" – a general user. Second, there is a normal (appropriate) way to use any piece of equipment. This norm is expressed by saying what "one" does, as in "one eats one's peas with a fork."" (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 151)

what gives meaning and what has meaning are equiprimordial. For Dreyfus, the equiprimordial

and normative totality that *is* average existence serves the primary purpose of functionality.

Averageness, everydayness, equipment, the public are all functions of coping.[20]

Dreyfus' averageness-model of normativity helps to clarify the interrelatedness between

the averageness of equipment as it appears alongside the average user of equipment, and the

usefulness of the network of relations. Indeed, life is lived in an average way most of the time

and this is why life, for the most part, *works*.[21] Dreyfus provides interesting insight into the way

average behavior establishes normativity, and examines the comprehensiveness of its reach. That

is to say, nothing eludes averageness. The point here is noteworthy especially given the self-

concealment of averageness; averageness *is* average because its averageness *conceals* just how

average it is.[22] As Heidegger writes, "Overnight, everything that is primordial gets glossed over

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[20] Dreyfus cites language as the best example of the positive importance of averageness. "This intelligibility, resulting from Dasein's tendency to fall in with public norms, is the basis of everyday understanding… [For Heidegger] the source of the intelligibility of the world is the average public practices through which alone there can be any understanding at all. What is shared is not a conceptual scheme, i.e., not a belief system that can be made explicit and justified. Not that we share a belief system that is always implicit and arbitrary…. What we share is simply our average comportment. Once a practice has been explained by appealing to what one does, no more basic explanation is possible." (Ibid., 155)

[21] Heidegger contends: "Thus the particular Dasein in its everydayness is *disburdened* by the "they". Not only that; by thus disburdening it of its Being, the "they" accommodates Dasein [kommt…dem Dasein entgegen] if Dasein has any tendency to take things easily and make them easy. And because the "they" constantly accommodates the particular Dasein by disburdening it of its Being, the "they" retains and enhances its stubborn dominion." (BT 165/SZ 127-128)

[22] Dreyfus discusses what average intelligibility conceals: "There is, however, something that average everyday intelligibility obscures, viz., that it is *merely* average everyday intelligibility. It takes for granted that the everyday for-the-sake-of-whichs and the equipment that serves them are based upon God's goodness, human nature, or at least solid good sense. This is what Heidegger called "the perhaps necessary appearance of foundation."… What gets covered up in everyday understanding is not some deep intelligibility as the tradition has always held; it is that the ultimate "ground" of intelligibility is simply shared practices. There is no *right* interpretation. Average intelligibility is not inferior intelligibility; it simply obscures its own groundlessness. This is the last stage of the hermeneutics of suspicion. The only deep interpretation left is that there is no deep interpretation." (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 156-157)

as something that has long been well known. Everything gained by a struggle becomes just something to be manipulated. Every secret loses its force." More clearly, everyday activity can get by, cope, talk, work because it does not know that it is grounded in and preserving an average way of life.[23] The functionality of life depends on life not knowing its own functionality.[24] Indeed, Dreyfus clears important ground for understanding the character of average everydayness and the normativity therein. Nevertheless, despite the clarity of his analysis, Dreyfus's investigation leaves certain important questions pending. For example, why is life functional? Why does life tend towards the functionality of averageness? From a different perspective, Dreyfus does not investigate the ground of normativity. In effect, what *transcends* normativity? Indeed, is Dreyfus correct in his conclusion that average intelligibility is the baseline of interpretation and normativity, and, in effect, that there is nothing deeper than (average everyday) normativity?

Dreyfus' averageness-model of normativity is in many ways omnipresent in all subsequent pragmatist readings of the early Heidegger, a predictable trend given that the question concerning *how we should be* is an essential part of pragmatism. After all, according to the pragmatist *how we should be* is bound to *what is most practical* (in point of fact, the idea is presupposed by the pragmatist position – how we should be *is (or should be)* determined by

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[23] Dreyfus describes the importance of shared practices: "Counting on the shared agreement in our practices, we can do anything we want to do: understand the world, understand each other, have language, have families, have science, etc." (Ibid., 156)

[24] Dreyfus notes that Heidegger believes average understanding conceals another, clearer understanding: "[Heidegger] holds that everyday intelligibility is a pseudoclarity achieved at the expense of a "genuine" clarity that is covered up" (156). However, Dreyfus takes issue with the point. Indeed, he suggests that the notion that there is another type of understanding than the average and practical intelligibility of everyday life is dubitable. Dreyfus writes: "But why say that in everyday life intelligibility gets *obscured*, rather than that in public practice everything gets whatever intelligibility it has? Is there a higher intelligibility?" (Ibid., 156)

practicality). Therefore, a foreseeable tendency in pragmatist readings of the early Heidegger is to deliberate the issue of normativity. Since Heidegger's discussions of average everydayness and the levelling down of the public easily lend themselves to normative interpretations, it is not surprising that pragmatist critics often investigate the issue. William Blattner, for one, agrees with the averageness-model and the argument that Heidegger's description of average everydayness reveals the pervasive normativity in our daily lives. Like Dreyfus before him, Blattner too finds completeness in the normativity of Heidegger's discussion of daily life and the public, but uncovers incompleteness in the *way* normativity has been described. Rather than take issue with the ground of normativity, Blattner seemingly finds a different gap in Dreyfus' argument, namely, that the averageness model glosses or generalizes the generality of daily activities. To extrapolate from Blattner's general argument, Dreyfus does not describe the *way* normativity works in average life; in order to color in the blanks in the averageness-model while staying within the general picture of Dreyfus' argument, Blattner adds another layer to the normativity of averageness, specifically, social expectation.[25]

Blattner argues that the reason the averageness of everyday life and the levelling down of the public effectively impose normativity is because of the social expectation they create.[26]

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[25] Blattner contends: "The others are not a community constituted by common commitments, but rather the Anyone. The shared social horizon, the with-world, is made up not of some definite group, a sum of persons, but rather by a social structure, a web of paraphernalia-roles, tasks, and for-the-sakes-of-which… We are what we pursue, and what we pursue is constituted by what is an issue in what we do. Heidegger's principal concern in Division I Chapter 4 is to establish that what and how things are an issue for us is governed by the social patterns in which we live." (Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 69)

[26] Blattner describes the normativity of averageness in the following way. "There is a way one does things. There are ways to hammer, ways to drive, ways to drink coffee, and ways to be a teacher. Proximally and for the most part, we do things the way one does them. Because that man is drinking a coffee as one drinks coffee, his presence is unobtrusive, obvious. I "know what he is doing," because he is doing it as one does it. If he is drinking coffee abnormally (say he is lying on the floor of the coffee house while he drinks), then he obtrudes, stands out, and

Given cultural practices, a set of practical social standards are established. The set of social

standards create expectations on everyday individuals to (necessarily) follow – at least, they are

rules the undifferentiated-self *should* follow to remain pacifically undifferentiated.[27] In other

words, individual normativity is really social normativity; the individual is only significant given

the relation they have to the web of practical social relations. For example, as Blattner remarks,

the way one can be a teacher is part of the network of relations within which one uses hammers

or drinks from coffee mugs.[28] That is to say, *all* relations – to things, other people and to

ourselves – are part of the network of practical social relations, within which we find ourselves

most of the time. The network of practical social relations levels down our expectations to an

average way of life. The expectations we place on ways of doing things *is* the normativity of our

average life. Therefore, Blattner's social-expectation-model of normativity unearths the

interesting addendum to Dreyfus' averageness-model: average life does not determine the

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requires interpretation. We can think of these social patterns as a set of "expectations," as long as we do not take the word "expectation" too narrowly to refer to psychological states of expecting." (Ibid., 69-70)

[27] Blattner describes Heidegger's analysis of deviance as a way of enforcing the normativity of averageness: "Deviance matters to us, and the care we have about deviance he calls "distantiality." Deviance stands out for us, in conspicuous, and we are disturbed by it. Typically we seek to suppress it. We look askance at people who are inappropriately dressed, we correct mispronunciations, we let people know, subtly or not so subtly, when we think they are "out of line," as we say. This suppression of deviance leads to what Heidegger calls "subjection"… We are subject to the attempts to suppress deviance on the part of others, so much so, in fact, that we suppress deviance in ourselves. Walking down the streets of any town in America, people are mostly dressed very much alike: men wear "men's clothes," women "women's clothes," and no one is walking around naked or in astronaut's gear. Even in "deviant communities" people often dress mostly alike, albeit usually so as to try to shock the larger community from which they are deviating. This similarity, this normalness of human life, Heidegger calls "averageness"" (Ibid., 70)

[28] Ibid., 69

average way to do and use things, but rather, average life *is* part of the average way to do and use things.[29]

In general, Blattner's addition to Dreyfus' averageness-model helps clarify the extensive reach of the normativity of the public, as well as the fact that average life does not determine average ways of doing things, but rather – and importantly – average life and average ways of doing things are discovered concurrently within the web of social relations. In other words, the network of everyday social relations (and its accompanying normative expectations) reveals averageness as *the way* of life – it is the discovering of averageness.[30] Similar to Dreyfus, however, Blattner does not address the question concerning the ground of social relations. Moreover, neither Dreyfus nor Blattner delve deeply into the fact that usefulness and functionality (construed in the averageness-model and the social-expectation model as the basic character of everyday human activity) are not things humans choose. In this way, everyday human activity is not only submitted to normativity (a passivity only marginally noted by pragmatist critics), but furthermore, normativity is itself passively delivered from a ground over which normativity itself has no control. Therefore, normativity might show us how we should be,

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[29] As Blattner describes: "The public normativity that sets the standard against which deviance is measured is not the sort of thing that you or I can own, and we cannot free ourselves from it or swear off of it. So, it is difficult to see how the Anyone could be in-the-world. *You and I* can, however, be in-the-the-world in such a way that our lives are dominated by the Anyone, in such a way that we have, as Heidegger says, "lost ourselves" in the Anyone. Thus, by "the Anyone-self" Heidegger must mean an individual self that lives its life in thoroughgoing subjection to the Anyone." (Ibid., 72)

[30] As Heidegger writes: "The "they" is there alongside everywhere [ist überall dabei], but in such a manner that it has always stolen away whenever Dasein presses for a decision. Yet because the "they" presents every judgment and decision as its own, it deprives the particular Dasein of its answerability. The "they" can, as it were, manage to have 'them' constantly invoking it. It can be answerable for everything most easily, because it is not someone who needs to vouch for anything. It 'was' always the "they" who did it, and yet it can be said that it has been 'no one'. In Dasien's everydayness the agency through which most things come about is one of which we must say that "it was no one"." (BT 165/127)

but this is not the end of the story. Normativity is *itself* an expression of a deeper character of life, a character yet to be disclosed. In other words, the fact that there *is* normativity is an expression of another more fundamental type of normativity. Or, to put it in the form of a problem, neither Dreyfus nor Blattner address the question: Why is there normativity rather than not?

As a way into the discussion of activity and passivity in normativity, Taylor Carman attempts to reveal the ground of Dreyfus's averageness-model and Blattner's social-expectation-model by comparing the normativity of average everyday life to the normativity of authentic being, or in other words, how an individual can recognize their submission to the averageness of the network of relations and make a choice to be an (authentic) individual.[31] Carman contends that the normativity of average everydayness *is not* a choice – one *must* be and act and live the way of the public – but the normativity of authenticity *is* a choice – one *can* choose to be oneself. In this way, Carman argues there is an asymmetry to normativity – in effect, an asymmetry between the passivity of average life and the activity of authentic life – and that the asymmetry is not accounted for in Heidegger's discussion of authenticity.[32] Although our present interest is not

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[31] Carman interprets Heidegger's discussion of authenticity as against the expressivist paradigm – i.e. the paradigm that human beings find their "proper end and possible achievement" in understanding "their true selves." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 265) Rather, for Heidegger "any such ideal of total self-realization, self-actualization, or completion is incoherent and impossible in principle for an entity like Dasein. Nor can this view be understood as a mere minor disagreement within an otherwise continuous tradition. Rather, to reject the ideal posited by the expressivist paradigm an unintelligible, as unrealizable not just as a matter of social or psychological fact but essentially, as Heidegger does, is to abandon the paradigm altogether." (266)

[32] Carman contends: "What Heidegger's account of authenticity entails, I believe, though he does not draw the inference explicitly himself, is that there can be no fully objective, perspectivally symmetrical concept of the self. Rather, there is a radical asymmetry between first- and second- or third-person perspectives, an asymmetry, that is to say, between my own reflexive understanding of *myself* and another's understanding of me as *a self*. On Heidegger's view, our reflexive understanding of *ourselves* is irreducible to any symmetrical and impersonal conception of *the self*, nor is any metaphysically substantial or robust *self* realizable in our own authentic understanding of *ourselves*." (Ibid., 267)

in Carman's discussion of authenticity, the asymmetrical-model of normativity he introduces *is* interesting to our current conversation inasmuch as it introduces a fresh concern for us, namely, the question of choice.

Indeed, Carman raises the issue of *choice* in normativity – a topic mostly passed over by Dreyfus and Blattner. Arguably, choice is an essential component of normativity. After all, for *one way* of doing things to be valuable or meaningful or more practical than *other ways* of doing things, that is, for *a way* to be normative there must be *other* possible ways of being. There must be a choice. If a basic character of existence is to tend towards averageness, indeed, if what we are *just is* norm-following creatures,[33] then normative behavior is not so much an activity as it is a fact, or an expression of our facticity. In this case, the normativity of average everyday life is not exactly what we mean by normativity. To be certain, we might have the choice (as Dreyfus describes) to eat with a fork and knife or to eat with chopsticks – but the contingencies of these choices are an expression of the *fact* that we *are* norm-following creatures; in effect, the particularities of our actions can be chosen, but *that* we follow norms, that we *are* normative is a basic character of existence and indeed, *not* a choice.

Perhaps, then, as Carman suggests, normativity is expressed at the level of authentic being, that is, in the moment when an individual has the choice to follow the norms or to be an individual. The problem is, Carman argues, asymmetry complicates the matter of authenticity.[34]

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[33] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 153

[34] Carman raises a possible criticism of Heidegger: "Selves exist, to be sure. Daseins are selves. Selves are neither fictions nor artificial constructs fabricated by anxious creatures whose selflessness strikes them as somehow problematic and unsettling. Nevertheless, the self is an essential social phenomenon, for it emerges only in Dasein's being-with, hence only with the admixture of a second-and even a third-person point of view. We are selves above all in the eyes of others, not just directly and authentically for ourselves, by ourselves. Yet *Being and Time* seems to

Carman raises an interesting point: even authentic being involves the passivity of averageness.

That is to say, since average everydayness is a basic character of life, the choice to choose

oneself *must* involve the choice to choose to be something over which one has no choice – one

must choose to be the type of being who lives averagely and *not* as an individual most of the

time (*i.e.,* as someone who most of the time does not understand themselves or others as

differentiated individuals). Is authenticity, then, really a *choice*?[35] And if choice *is* an essential

component of normativity (*i.e.,* we can only follow the norm if we have the choice *not* to follow

the norm), and choice does *not* occur at the level of the average everyday *nor* entirely at the level

of authentic being, can we even claim that normativity exists in the early Heidegger?[36]

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offer no account of this other-oriented dimension of selfhood, indeed authentic selfhood, quite apart from the anonymous other-directedness of fallen, inauthentic existence. While Heidegger was right to insist on the irreducibility of the first person to any impersonal general concept of the self, then, he was wrong to ignore those aspects of sociality that inevitably mingle and complicate our first-person understandings with our understandings of others, and with theirs of us" (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 268)

[35] Carman develops his view of the self: "I want to suggest, there can be no impersonal metaphysics of the self, only complexly interwoven and interpenetrating phenomenologies of selfhood in oneself, which Heidegger describes in Division II of *Being and Time*, and of selfhood in others, which he does not. Indeed, the existential analytic has virtually nothing at all to say about other selves. And although the peculiarly egoless or characterless quality of authentic selfhood, as Heidegger describes it, suggests that the self as such remains invisible to itself qua authentic, it may be so only from the first-person point of view, just as my own biographical death necessarily remains unexperienceable by me, though others any experience it, as I do theirs." (Ibid., 268)

[36] In the following passage, Carman suggests the problem of choice in normativity through a series of questions: "Even if Heidegger is right to refuse to assimilate first-person self-understanding to any second- or third-person conception of intraworldly selves, then, his account remains unsatisfying inasmuch as it tells us nothing about the hermeneutic conditions of bringing the two perspectives together in an overarching interpretation of human beings as selves. How is it possible, indeed *is* it possible, to come to understand myself as others understand me, namely, as an intraworldly character whose life concludes with my eventual earthly demise? Is it possible to come to understand myself, if only partially, as another? At some level, of course, learning to see ourselves as others do, and perhaps coming to see others as they see themselves, is a necessary condition of empathy and the most basic forms of moral awareness, and Heidegger's failure to account of it is, I suspect, bound up with his more general failure to understand ethics as a proper branch of philosophy." (Ibid., 268-269)

Carman's asymmetrical-model of normativity opens a new platform of discussion concerning choice, a platform that Mark Wrathall and Beatrice Han-Pile explore and elaborate. Wrathall argues that human activity is constrained by social factors and that the way we are is for the most part determined by our place in the network of social relations – on this point Wrathall clearly agrees with Blattner's social-expectation model, and by extension with the basic premise of Dreyfus' averageness-model.[37] The constraint of the public interpretation is not just a limiting factor on everyday human activity – it *is* the ground of everyday human activity.[38] That is, without the constraint and limiting factor of our social situatedness, we would not have an average way of life; indeed, we would not have *our* way of life.[39] In this way, Wrathall argues that our deliverance to the social constraint of average life is the ground of practical engagement and not the other way around (*i.e.,* practical engagement is not the ground of our passive submission to social constraint). In short, passivity comes (phenomenologically) first. Put otherwise, Wrathall argues that the average way of life of the They [*das Man*] affects a dictatorship over ordinary human activity.[40] The emphasis on dictatorship is revealing – Wrathall

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[37] Mark A.Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment: Truth, Language, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 95

[38] Wrathall, *Unconcealment*, 95.

[39] Wrathall explains: "Heidegger, for one, has argued that our activities are heavily constrained by social factors. We always act within a public realm, which is already organized and interpreted in a determinate way… Indeed, Heidegger argues that our being "delivered over" to the public interpretation of things is an inescapable feature of human existence. What is true of action in general is also true for our use of language… So not just our possibilities for practical engagement with the things and people around us but even the possible range of what we can say is subject in some way to others." (Ibid., 95)

[40] Wrathall writes: "The tone of Heidegger's remarks about the 'one', for example his describing it as a 'dictatorship', might lead one to think that he rejects all conformity. But that's not true – Heidegger does recognize that having settled, normalized practices and expectations is not necessarily a bad thing. It would be a disaster if you constantly had to decide on every little thing that you were going to do (what to wear, what to eat, which side of the

underlines the passivity with which ordinary human life carries through normative trends. The

average human does not choose to be an average way anymore than they choose or determine

what averageness is. The average human is deployed by averageness. Wrathall's social-

constraint-model of normativity adjusts and clarifies Carman's asymmetrical-model inasmuch as

it collapses the asymmetry between the passivity of averageness and the activity of authenticity

such that authenticity is grounded in averageness. Instead of asymmetry, Wrathall argues that

passivity is pervasive even in Heidegger's discussion of the possibility of authenticity. The

question is *not*, as Carman's asymmetrical-model implies, how do we modify the passivity of our

average everydayness in the *choice to choose* authentic being?[41] As Wrathall clarifies, the issue

is not 'are there others?' or 'how do I relate to others?', but rather 'can I be myself?'.[42] The point

is *even* authentic being is in part (or mostly) characterized by passivity.[43] Therefore, normativity,

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road to drive on, etc.). By organizing our common world, conformity provides the basis upon which we are free to make important decisions." (Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 55-56).

[41] Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 267-269.

[42] Wrathall writes: "Because others play a decisive role in making me who I am, there is no genuine 'other minds' problem. We don't have to infer that other exist, because we are constantly in contact with them. The real question is not 'are there others?', but rather 'can I be myself?' For it turns out that, at least in the everyday existence which immediately structures my world, my essence is not dictated by me, but by others." (Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 53)

[43] Indeed, the unmasterability of the choice of authenticity is intimated in the following passage. "We are inauthentically striving for being when we are "ensnared" within a particular understanding of being, and thus feel compelled to chase after certain things that are presented as important or unimportant within that understanding of being… The authentic striving does not try to take possession of a thing but to own up to it… I take a stand on the world, decide to be such and such a person, and strive after this way of being. *I can never accomplish it* [my emphasis], but by projecting it as that on the basis of which I will understand myself, it gives me a basis for my experience of beings." (Wrathall, *Unconcealment*, 90) Wrathall continues his argument, "This way of projecting ourselves (striving) will allow certain things and situations to make their appearance, but it will also conceal other things and situations that are incompatible with or irrelevant to our understanding. If one focuses on error as the opposite of truth, Heidegger believes, it makes one lose sight of this more fundamental interplay between revealing and concealing in our projective action in the world." (91)

i.e., the way we *should* be, is in part how we *necessarily are* already. Normativity is in fact *not* a clear choice.

Wrathall develops the discussion concerning choice in authenticity and normativity, a topic that Beatrice Han-Pile carefully elaborates in her essay "Freedom and the "Choice to Choose Oneself" in *Being and Time*".[44] As Han-Pile remarks, there are different levels of choice depending on what level of existence we are discussing. For example, the choices that arise in the average everyday are circumscribed by the meaningfulness of the world (or in other words, they are choices circumscribed by the network of relations).[45] Yet, despite the passivity of our facticity, we make choices all the time in our daily lives.[46] I can choose to speak, eat, walk, work in a number of different ways, and although the ways I understand these actions are constrained by a basic averageness, I nonetheless have choices to make. Another level of choice exists when we modify our relation to ourselves in the moment of vision [*Augenblick*], that is, when the possibility of understanding our differentiated selves reveals itself (or in other words, when we can choose to understand ourselves as we really *are*).[47] In the moment of vision, we must make a

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[44] Beatrice Han-Pile, "Freedom and the Choice," 291-319.

[45] Han-Pile writes: "So to understand *Being and Time*'s particular approach, we need to distinguish between two sort of freedom: ontological freedom (transcendence), which is the condition of possibility of ontic, or existentiell freedom, itself the main concern of *Being and Time*." (Ibid., 292)

[46] Han-Pile broadly outlines the conditions of ontological freedom: "for Heidegger, being ontologically free entails (a) that Dasein can comport itself, as opposed to animal behavior; (b) that in doing so, it opens up a normative space; and (c) that it has alternative possibilities. In short, it is the condition of possibility of *all* forms of Dasein's agency, including existentiell freedom." (Ibid., 292)

[47] Han-Pile describes the moment: "The section on anxiety plays a genetic part in the emancipation process by allowing Dasein to see for the first time that it is both ontologically free and ontically unfree. By breaking down its involvement with the world, anxiety enables Dasein to become pre-reflectively aware of its self-intepretative nature, and faces it with an ultimatum: Dasein has to choose to choose itself, or not. In the first case, it will become existentially free; but either way, it will be irreversibly transformed." (Ibid., 294)

choice – the choice is to choose. Here, Han-Pile perceptively identifies a double-structure of choice and nuances the relation between the double-structure of choice and the concurrently modifying self. She argues that the first choice (which she short-hands as C1) presents itself to the self who has not yet made a choice, that is, to the undifferentiated self (S1). Indeed, S1 is average and undifferentiated – it is part of the They-self who is struck momentarily by the possibility of authentic understanding. S1 can choose to make a choice or not. If S1 does not make a choice then she remains undifferentiated and neither the second choice nor a modified self occurs. If, on the other hand, S1 chooses C1, that is, if the undifferentiated self chooses to be open to differentiation, then the self is transformed into the potential for differentiation, that is, into S2. The second choice for authentic self-understanding (*i.e.,* the choice to choose oneself or C2) presents itself only to the potentially differentiated self of S2.[48]

Notably, even if I do not make the choice to choose in the first instance, that is, if S1 does not make C1, the self is transformed. As Han-Pile asserts earlier, the self is transformed or

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[48] Han-Pile breaks down the choice: "So anxious Dasein can choose to choose itself [C1(C2)] and become existentially free, or choose not to choose itself [C1~(C2)] and become self-deceived. But the double choice opens up yet another, important option: it is equally possible and even common for Dasein not to perform C2, but this time *without having chosen to do so* … simply because the possibility of C1 hasn't been disclosed to it. Then Dasein is not self-deceived but, in Heidegger's words, "undifferentiated"… Not having been faced with explicit anxiety, it does not have enough self-awareness to realize, even at a pre-reflective level, that there is a choice to be made. Note that it doesn't follow from this that the "undifferentiated" mode is evaluatively neutral... On such a picture, the undifferentiated mode is also inauthentic but to a lesser degree, the significant difference with fully fledged inauthenticity being that undifferentiatedness does not involve a violation of Dasein's epistemic standards, nor any deceptive intent: Dasein is motivated by its desire to maintain the more comfortable status quo of its immersion in the They into failing to see that it has a choice to make. But it is not aware of this failure to see and does not intend it. By contrast, C1 (~C2) involves both the pre-reflective awareness of the double choice and an intentional attempt to repress both this awareness and Dasein's choice not to choose itself. Significantly, the watershed line between weaker and stronger forms of inauthenticity is the face to face with the double choice brought about by anxiety." (Ibid., 297)

modified due to active self-deception.[49] By Han-Pile's description, then, there is S1, and S2, and

I will add S2'. There is a transformation between S1 and S2 or between S1 and S2', depending

on how one faces the first choice (C1). In either case of how one addresses the first choice, the

self is transformed. The point I am raising here does not in any way undermine Han-Pile's

argument, nor does it render a contradiction in Heidegger's argument. I raise the point because it

highlights the underlying relationship between choice and transcendence. Regardless of how one

responds to a choice, the appearance of a choice *is* transcendent. I am something else irrespective

of how I respond to the choices presented to me. In other words, I surpass myself, or *transcend*

regardless of how or *if* I choose. In this way, the following passage can be better understood:

> "Being, as the basic theme of philosophy, is no class or genus of entities;
> yet it pertains to every entity. Its 'universality' is to be sought higher up.
> Being and the structure of Being lie beyond every entity and every
> possible character which an entity may possess. *Being is the transcendens*
> *pure and simple*. And the transcendence of Dasein's Being is distinctive
> in that it implies the possibility and the necessity of the most radical
> *individuation*. Every disclosre of Being as the *transcendens* is
> *transcendental* knowledge. *Phenomenological truth* (*the disclosedenss of*
> *Being*) *is veritas transcendentalis*."[50]

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[49] Han-Pile further details the moment of the choice to choose oneself: "So the doubling of the choice is crucial in two respects. First, it allows Heidegger to distinguish between more passive cases of existentiell indifferentiation and more active cases of self-deception – in other words, between absorption as the ontic consequence of falling, on the one hand, and Dasein's "fleeing in the face of itself" (184), on the other. This helps explain Heidegger's well-known pronouncement according to which "this potentiality for being [existence], as one which is in each case mine, is [ontologically] free either for authenticity [C1(C2)] or for inauthenticity [C1~(C2)] or for a mode in which neither of these has been differentiated… Second, and importantly, the doubling shows that the ability to choose is a necessary but *non-sufficient* condition of existentiell freedom. If Dasein performs C1 but not C2, it still chooses. Yet it is not existentielly free: it is enthralled more deeply than it was before, this time not by blind conformity to the They but by its own self-deception. Thus existentiell freedom requires one to make the *right* choice." (Ibid., 297-298)

[50] BT 62/SZ 38

Han-Pile's main point, however, is that normativity is possible given the choice between undifferentiation and differentiation, *i.e.,* the choice in C1. Without the choice to choose, the authentic choice (C2) is not possible. Therefore, normativity is possible given C1, the possibility of a choice is opened by C1, and the *right* choice becomes possible in C2.[51] In this manner, the normativity of the average everyday as it is discussed by many pragmatist critics is contingent on a deeper form of normativity, one that is not fulfilled most of the time, and one that requires the choice to open oneself to doing what one *should* do. In point of fact, if we choose to choose ourselves, do the *right* thing and reveal the possibility of freedom expressed in true choice, the normativity of the average everyday no longer holds sway over our actions as it once did; we are differentiated in our undifferentiation, a modification of genuine undifferentiation.[52] As Han-Pile

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[51] The claim is explicitly made on page 298 (Han-Pile, "Freedom and the Choice," 298). However, Han-Pile expresses the notion in different words when she discusses the difference between third-person accountability and first-person responsibility. "Not the transition from passive ("having responsibility") to the active ("making oneself responsible"): responsibility is not simply something that befalls Dasein but something it must take hold of. To understand this, it is helpful to distinguish between third-person accountability and first-person responsibility, and this in the light of the difference between ontological and ontic forms of freedom. Because it is ontologically free and thus has a specific, norm-responsive kind of agency, Dasein is accountable for what it does and can legitimately be praised or blamed for it." (Han-Pile 301) She concludes her argument, "The choice to choose oneself allows Dasein to take responsibility for itself as it presses ahead into a particular possibility. But it does not disclose to Dasein that death impends at every moment of its life and that each and every of its possibilities, including the current one, may very well not come to be… In existentiell freedom, the choice of choosing oneself is made wholeheartedly in the sense that Dasein takes without reservation as much responsibility for itself as is allowed by its finitude and the relative degree of ontological transparency achieved. Authenticity requires the further step of making the same self-commitment, but with a pre-reflective awareness of the radical fragility of each and every commitment." (304)

[52] I use the term 'genuine' in keeping with Heidegger's use of the term in *Being and Time*: "Understanding *can* devote itself primarily to the disclosedness of the world; that is, Dasein can, proximally and for the most part, understand itself in terms of its world. Or else understanding throws itself primarily into the "for-the-sake-of-which"; that is, Dasein exists as itself. Understanding is either authentic, arising out of one's own Self as such, or inauthentic. The 'in-' of "inauthentic" does not mean that Dasein cuts itself off from its Self and understands 'only' the world. The world belongs to Being-one's-Self as Being-in-the-world. On the other hand, authentic understanding, no less than that which is inauthentic, *can* be either genuine or not genuine." (BT 186/SZ 146) Genuine inauthenticity implies a fallenness that does not know it is fallen, or an undifferentiation that does not know its undifferentiation; in short, genuine inauthentic being does not recognize its possibilities *as* possibilities.

reveals – and this is the point that really clarifies the issues raised by Carman's asymmetrical-model and Wrathall's passivity-model – the question of choosing our basic passivity is not a problem as Carman believes it to be because the choice to choose differentiates us from the undifferentiation of average everyday life; we are not (actively) choosing to be passive (as Carman's criticism of the asymmetry of authenticity implies), but rather, embracing a fact over which we have no control (and thereby opening a space for other possibilities to appear). In other words, our differentiation changes our relation to the They [*das Man*], but it does not change that we are (and should be) the They. What we *should* do in our daily lives is determined or dictated by the network of relations of average life. *This*, however, is *not* what we *should* do *fundamentally* speaking. Indeed, Han-Pile argues that a deeper form of normativity is concealed by the normativity of the fixity of ordinary life. Undifferentiation conceals the possibility of differentiation, a possibility from which choice and fundamental normativity are revealed. Therefore, what we *should* do is make the choice to choose, and *choose* ourselves. As Han-Pile argues, the second choice is our debt and responsibility to the unmasterability of our lives.[53]

Therefore, the genuine form of inauthenticity is one in which Dasein does not choose to be inauthentic, but is *just so* unreflectively. In keeping with this, non-genuine inauthenticity implies the person knows and understands she has choices and possibilities, and she chooses not to confront them. Thus, she chooses not to make C1, but rather flees from her authentic possibilities, burying herself in the disburdenment of inauthentic being. She makes the choice not to choose. Non-genuine inauthenticity is an example of an inauthentic being that knows itself to be inauthentic.

[53] Han-Pile describes the "passion" involved in the choice to choose: "Such "passion" is needed because this intensification of ontological transparency (the "release from the illusions of the They") makes the choice to choose oneself even harder: it forces Dasein both to understand that it is temporally finite *and* not to succumb to the nihilistic temptation of holding this finitude against the very possibility of commitment… Being free for death, the highest form of freedom, is an implicit response to this risk, which involves both the acknowledgement of the relative powerlessness entailed by finitude and the – equally relative but intensely passionate – overcoming of such powerlessness through the choice to choose a self that can still own up to itself *even though* it has a pre-reflective awareness of its own limitations." (Han-Pile, "Freedom and the Choice," 305)

In general, the pragmatist reading of normativity focusses on average everydayness as setting the standard for normal human activity. It is interesting to remark the various ways critics address the issue of passivity – some argue that it is secondary to the willful activity of normative behavior, while others interpret it as central in the dictatorship of normative standards (so central that the very notion of choice is expunged). Only Han-Pile, however, really gets to the central point regarding passivity, which is the following: normativity, if it is to remain normativity as we generally understand it, must *indeed* involve choice, but the choice is a passive choice to be free and responsible for what we already are. Therefore, our investigation of normativity must concentrate on how it relates to choice, and what the nature of choice is in the Heidegger of *Being and Time.* As Han-Pile shows us, choice is not an active process, but one delivered from a moment of vision – something we have no control over – and that opens the possibility to choose the undifferentiation and unmasterability of our lives. And yet, as she argues, there is nevertheless a *right* choice. Normativity exists nonetheless in the early Heidegger even if the normativity is itself not a clear choice, but a way that we relate to choice. The point I want to raise is that even Han-Pile's understanding of normativity, an understanding that thematizes the fundamental passivity of existence, remains part of the (meaningful, revealed) world. That is to say, normativity has yet to be discussed from the perspective of what is concealed by the worldly appearance of normativity. Indeed, to the questions posed earlier (*i.e.,* why is there normativity at all and what transcends normativity?) I will add, what is *beyond* what we should and should not do? That is, what *can't* we do? What is *not* possible? In order to delve into these questions, we must now consider other perspectives on normativity, perspectives that concern themselves less with what we *should* do, and more with the fact that we *can* (and thereby *should*) do anything at all.

Section 2: Another version of normativity – we should be what we can't (and shouldn't) be

Normativity in the early Heidegger is predominantly understood on two levels: first, the normativity of the average everyday (as I investigated in the previous section), and second, the normativity of authentic being (as I began to explore at the end of the previous section). In this section, I will introduce a discussion of the deeper level of normativity – ontological or fundamental normativity – that will reveal what is hidden in the pragmatist understanding of average everyday normativity. My path will include an investigation into the call of conscience and the nullity [*Nichtigkeit*] from which the call of conscience appears. I will discover that the 'not' is the ground of choice in the early Heidegger. Finally, my inquiry will reveal that fundamental normativity is inextricably bound to the meaning of 'meaning' and to the transcendence of Dasein.

If the language of the early Heidegger's discussion of the They and the levelling down of the average everyday lends itself well to discussions of normativity, so too does Heidegger's description of guilt and the call of conscience. The language of the latter topic is significant – What are we guilty of? What should we do to overcome our guilt? Why does the conscience call? Where does the call *call* from? In "Subjectivity: Locating the First-Person in *Being and Time*",[54] Steven Crowell examines the nuances in the call of conscience. Unlike many of the pragmatists before him who contend that normativity is essentially the domain of the public and determined by the averageness of everyday life, a domain disrupted by the mineness of the

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[54] Steven Crowell, "Subjectivity: Locating the First-Person in *Being and Time*," in *Heidegger's Being and Time: Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt, 117-140 (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

authentic self (*i.e.*, the self who understands that it is not a self most of the time), Crowell argues that the *fundamental* condition of possibility of both inauthentic and authentic being subtends both possibilities of being.[55] In other words, authenticity and inauthenticity are modes of being that arise from a deeper, hidden condition – a condition from which a deeper sense of normativity can be described. Moreover, the hidden condition of possibility itself arises from a passive ground.[56] Existence as it is most of the time – the daily hustle and bustle of life's activities – can be what it is, that is, it *can* be normative and it *can* enforce practical rules because *conscience* is the origin of norms and practicality.[57] As Heidegger writes, "*Being-guilty does not first result from indebtedness [Verschuldung], but that, on the contrary, indebtedness becomes possible only 'on the basis' of primordial Being-guilty.*"[58]

Our everyday understanding of indebtedness, of having a sense of obligation, is established by a deeper understanding of guilt, namely, what is called in the call of conscience. In other words, for average everyday normativity to *be* normative, we must be able to recognize the validity of the normative standards and to measure ourselves against the norms. Even deeper still, the validity of the normative standards must be measured against a more fundamental norm

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[55] As Crowell writes, "The call is neither an intentional act or expectation, desire, or belief, nor a 'performance' by the 'agent' in the world" (Crowell, "Subjectivity: Locating the First-Person," 128).

[56] Crowell contends, "Here we locate the place of the first-person in *Being and time*. It is neither the one-self (who says 'I' but not as 'I myself'), nor the authentic Self (a 'modification' of the one-self), but the hidden condition of both" (Ibid., 128).

[57] Crowell explores the relation between conscience and intelligibility: "A further condition on intentionality is provided by Division II's account of subjectivity as inwardness, conscience as first-person self-awareness. But why is conscience a necessary condition of intelligibility? The thesis I would like to explore is that it is because intelligibility involves something like the *capacity* for 'reason' in the sense of an ability to act in light of norms, and that conscience is the origin of this capacity" (Ibid., 129).

[58] BT 329/SZ 284

otherwise the standards themselves would be ungrounded. Put simply, for normative standards to work, we must be able to understand them *as* effective normative standards. Why, then, do we understand normative standards *as* normative standards? On this point, Crowell expressly separates himself from pragmatist discussions of normativity. The difference is clear: where pragmatists contend that normative standards preserve practicality and efficiency, Crowell argues that the preservation of practicality and efficiency arises from a deeper condition of possibility – *i.e.*, the condition that makes humans the type of beings who tend towards practical and efficient behavior.[59] In other words, Crowell pushes his investigation of normativity toward the deeper question, namely, why is there normativity at all? Conscience is the hidden condition from which authenticity and inauthenticity are possible, and conscience is itself grounded in the nullity. Crowell does not, however, develop an extensive investigation into the character of the nullity.

Simon Critchley, however, *does* delve into the null-based *content* of the call of conscience and therefore, in a sense, continues Crowell's investigation into an ontological discussion of the call of conscience. Critchley delves into the movement of the call of conscience as a call away from the they-self and towards oneself. Moreover, the content is the silent and

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[59] Crowell further explores normativity: "To act in light of norms is to recognize them as claims to validity and so, potentially, to *measure* them against an altogether different sort of standard – a 'metanorm' that Heidegger, following Plato, occasionally names 'the good.' This is the sort of first-person authority that derives from the first-person self-awareness as conscience. In Heidegger's terms, first-person authority is responsibility (*Verantowrtlichkeit*). Responsibility transforms a creature who is 'grounded' by social norms into a ground of obligation – one who 'grounds' norms by *giving* grounds, that is, reasons." (Crowell 130) Heidegger makes the point in the following way: "But because Dasein is *lost* in the "they', it must first *find* itself. In order to find *itself* at all, it must be 'shown' to itself in its possible authenticity. In terms of its *possibility*, Dasein *is* already a potentiality-for-Being-its-Self, but it needs to have this potentiality attested. In the following Interpretation we shall claim that this potentiality is attested by that which, in Dasein's everyday interpretation of itself, is familiar to us as the "*voice of conscience*" [*Stimme des Gewissens*]." (BT 313/SZ 268)

strange call of nothing.[60] The conscience expresses itself in the silence of reticence

[*Verschwiegenheit*] from which the individual is first aware of their thrownness, in effect, of

their lostness and undifferentiation in the They. Reticence expresses that something is amiss in

the automatic activity of daily life; silence clears the space for a modification, for a shift in vision

such that ordinary life first shows its automatism and its averageness. Certainly there *is*

something amiss – what we are in our daily life is not entirely what we are, we are *more* than

what we are in our average everydayness. The call *calls* silently and from the forgotten and

concealed part of the self, a self that is part of oneself and yet not – in this way the call from the

forgotten self is said to be uncanny [*Unheimlich*].[61] Here, a question takes shape: how does a

forgotten self, if it *is* surely forgotten, call? Indeed, a paradox begins to show itself.

Notably, Critchley's discussion brings us into contact with the paradoxical character of

the call of conscience, and in so doing, introduces a crucial aspect to normativity yet to be

disclosed – the paradox of what we *should* be, given what we are *not*.[62] The paradoxical

character of the call of conscience is described by Heidegger as arising from the paradoxical

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[60] As Critchley explains: "Heidegger argues that the call of conscience calls one away from one's listening to the they-self, which is always described as listening away, *hinhören auf*, to the hubbub of ambiguity. Instead, one listens to the call that pulls one away from this hubbub to the silent and strange certainty of conscience." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 70)

[61] Heidegger describes uncanniness in the following way: "In uncanniness Dasein stands together with itself primordially. Uncanniness brings this entity face to face with its undisguised nullity, which belongs to the possibility of its ownmost potentiality-for-Beiing. To the extent that for Dasein, as care, its Being is an issue, it summons itself as a "they" which is factically falling, and summons itself from its uncanniness towards its potentiality-for-Being. The appeal calls back by calling forth: it calls Dasein *forth* to the possibility of taking over, in existing, even that thrown entity which it is; it calls Dasein *back* to its thrownness so as to understand this thrownness as the null basis which it has to take up its existence. This calling-back in which conscience calls forth, gives Dasein to understand that Dasein itself – the null basis for its null projection, standing in the possibility of its Being – is to bring itself back to itself from its lostness in the "they"; and this means that it *is guilty*." (BT 333/SZ 287)

[62] See above quote from BT 333/SZ 287.

character of humans.[63] Most of the time, humans are active in average ways, busy in their daily lives, working through meaningful projects and caring about the things that matter. For the most part, the they-self *is* what humans are. However, this is not *all* that they are. The ordinary life of the they-self conceals another part of the self, a forgotten self, a self that is *more* than what it *is* in its daily activities. In this way, humans are both in untruth and truth, concealing and revealing. Thus, humans are a paradox – they are what they are *and* they are what they are not.

Likewise, the call of conscience has a paradoxical character inasmuch as part of us is lost in the they-self and therefore is called to, and part of us is open to the possibility of differentiating ourselves from the they-self and therefore is calling;[64] the call of conscience calls from the gap between untruth and truth, from the opening between what is concealed and what is revealed. From a different perspective, the call of conscience clears the space for fundamental normativity to appear. The call *calls* the everyday self back to the self that is *more* than average activity, and opens the possibility of a *choice to choose* what it *is* (which includes what it *is not*) and therefore *must* be. The paradox, therefore, reveals a deeper problem, or a more fundamental paradox:[65] *to be what we are we must choose to be what we are not (i.e., what is concealed)*. The

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[63] Critchley writes: "Dasein is both the caller and the called and there is no immediate identity between these two sides or faces of the call. How do we explain this? How do we explain this division at the heart of the call of conscience that we all hear…? In order to explain the division within the call, Heidegger folds the analysis of the call structure back into the care structure. The situation of Dasein being both the caller and the called corresponds to the structure of Dasein as both authentic and inauthentic, as anxious potentiality-for-Being or freedom and thrown lostness in *das Man*; that is, Dasein is both in the truth and in untruth." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 71)

[64] Critchley argues: "The logic of the call is paradoxical. On the one hand, the call of conscience that pulls Dasein out of its immersion and groundless floating in *das Man*, is nothing else that Dasein calling to itself, calling to itself by saying nothing. It is not God or my genes calling to me, it is me myself and I." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 71)

[65] Heidegger describes hearing the call of conscience: "Hearing the appeal correctly is thus tantamount to having an understanding of oneself in one's ownmost potentiality-for-Being – that is, to projecting oneself upon one's

fundamental paradox reveals a basic nullity from where life is forgotten and from where life is remembered or repeated. Since the choice to choose what we are (not) *is* what we are (in effect it is what we *must* be), what we *must* be is what we *are not*; in other words, we are *and must* be a paradox. To return to our earlier question concerning how a forgotten self can call, the call of conscience *can* call from the forgotten self because forgetfulness has remembering (or repetition [*Wiederholung*]) as a possibility. To use a term from the later Heidegger, the call is the echo or the resonating of forgetfulness.[66]

Another way of looking at the call of conscience, Critchley argues, is as the gap between two nothings – the nothing of average life as it participates in the network of relations (the lost self in the world) and the nothingness (of the possibility) of the mineness of death (the forgotten self, concealed by average life).[67] Moreover, if we press deeper into our phenomenological investigation of the condition of possibility of the nothingness from which the call of conscience calls, we unearth a fundamental nullity. The two nothings – the nothing of the world and the

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ownmost authentic potentiality for becoming guilty. When Dasein understandingly lets itself be called forth to this possibility, this includes its *becoming free* for the call – its readiness for the potentiality of getting appealed to. In understanding the call, Dasein is *in thrall to* [*hörig*] *its ownmost possibility of existence*. It has chosen itself. In so choosing, Dasein makes possible its ownmost Being-guilty, which remains closed off from the they-self. The common sense of the "they" knows only the satisfying of manipulable rules and public norms and the failure to satisfy them. It reckons up infractions of them and tries to balance them off. It has slunk away from its ownmost Being-guilty so as to be able to talk more loudly making "mistakes". But in the appeal, the they-self gets called [angerufen] the ownmost Being-guilty of the Self. Understanding the call is choosing; but it is not choosing of conscience, which as such cannot be chosen. What is chosen is *having*-a-conscience as Being-free for one's ownmost Being-guilty. "*Understanding the appeal*" means "*wanting to have a conscience*"." (BT 333-334/SZ 287-288)

[66] Heidegger describes the resonating: "The resonating must encompass the entire fissure and, most of all must be articulated as the counterplay to the interplay." (CP 85/BZP 108)

[67] Critchley describes the two nothings: "the *self is divided between two nothings*: on the one hand, the nothing of the world and, on the other, the nothingness of pure possibility revealed in being-towards-death." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 72)

nothing of death (expressed through the call of conscience) – are possible given a deeper level of nothingness, the nullity of thrown projection.[68] On the one hand, throwness is a nullity insofar as humans are always passively amidst a meaningful world; that is to say, the passivity of throwness is a nullity inasmuch as it is always partly concealed and indeterminable (and yet a basic character of humans). On the other hand, the choice to choose oneself is also a nullity inasmuch as the choice to be oneself *means* choosing to be what one is *not*. This can be discussed in at least two ways. First, the nullity of the choice to choose oneself can be thought of in terms of the mineness of death. The choice to surrender myself to *my* death, to *my* possibility of impossibility *is* the choice to be *my* self – a self that is differentiated by the self-nullifying fact that I am a finite being who is ultimately determined by the death that I have yet to be. Thus, the mineness of death opens the possibility of a self-transcending relation between what I *am* and what I am *not*. Second, the nullity of the choice to choose oneself can be thought of more broadly in the sense that *choice* renders one possibility actual and concurrently conceals a play of undifferentiated possibilities. In short, to choose *is* to nullify choice.[69] Importantly, the choice to choose oneself is itself the choice to thrown off one's throwness,[70] which in point of fact is a

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[68] Critchley argues: "The experience of guilt reveals the being of being human as a lack, as something wanting. The self is not just the ecstasy of a heroic leap towards authenticity energized by the experience of anxiety and being-towards-death. Such would be the heroic reading of the existential analytic… [however], on my view, the self's fundamental self-relation is to an unmasterable throwness, the burden of a facticity that weighs me down without my ever being able fully to pick it up. This is why I seek to evade myself. I project or throw off a throwness that catches me in its throw and inverts the movement of possibility by shattering it against impotence…. Dasein is a being suspended between two nothings, two nullities: the nullity of throwness and the nullity of projection." (Ibid., 75)

[69] Critchley explains the double nullity: "Dasein is a double nullity. It is simultaneously constituted and divided around this double nullity. This is the structure of thrown projection and the ontological meaning of guilt. That is, Dasein is guilty; it is indebted doubly; it is null at the heart of its being; it is essentially double lacking." (Ibid., 76)

[70] Critchley describes the authentic encounter with passivity: "I project or throw off throwness that catches me in its throw and inverts the movement of possibility by shattering it against impotence." (Ibid., 75)

projection grounded in the passivity or nullity of thrownness – something over which we have no control.[71]

Critchley's point, and indeed, the crucial point, is that any way we look at the call of conscience, the nullity of life is apparent.[72] From the nullity of thrown projection (*i.e.,* the site from which existence as it is lived in a meaningful world is discovered, or in other words, the discovering-self or the discovering *as such*), the possibility of the call of conscience appears (*i.e.,* the possibility of the covering-self calling the discovering-self is silently expressed). Moreover, from the call of conscience, a gap appears from which the nothingness of the world (that which gives meaning) and the nothingness of the mineness of death (that which has meaning) appear. Therefore, to put it briefly, the nullity is the discovering of the nothing.

In what sense, then, is the call a call of *conscience*? And in what sense are we guilty? Humans are thrown or delivered into existence and deployed meaningfully by the process. Moreover, the appropriation of humans conceals the fact that most of the time humans do not choose how to act or how to be, but rather, they passively work out their projects and the possibilities circumscribed by the world. In this way, humans are thrown projection, a

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[71] Critchley writes: "freedom is the choice of the one possibility of being: in choosing oneself and not the others. But what one is choosing in such a choice is the nullity of a projection that projects on the nullity of a thrown basis, over which one has no power. Freedom is the assumption of one's ontological guilt, of the double nullity that one is." (Ibid., 76)

[72] Heidegger describes the nullity in the following way: "in the structure of thrownness, as in that of projection, there lies essentialy a nullity. This nullity is the basis for the possibility of *in*authentic Dasein in its falling; and as falling, every inauthentic Dasein factically is. *Care itself, in its very essence, is permeated with nullity through and through*. Thus "care" – Dasein's Being – means, as thrown projection, Being-the-basis of a nullity (and this Being-the-basis is itself null). This means that *Dasein as such is guilty*, if our formally existential definition of "guilt" as "Being-the-basis of a nullity" is indeed correct." (BT 331/SZ 285)

pervasively passive structure that they *are* and yet guilty of being.[73] There *is* something owed,

something outstanding, and incomplete. The call of conscience announces the debt owed, and

yet, it is a debt that cannot be paid – this is part of the meaning of ontological guilt [*Schuld*], a

necessary debt that necessarily cannot be paid.[74] We are guilty of our passivity, of not being what

we should be, and of forgetting the fact that we are not what we should be. The call of

conscience calls us not so much to ourselves, as it calls us to our guilt. We cannot completely

pay our debt, but we can face it.[75]

Despite Critchley's impressive investigation into the nullity, a notion only marginally

described by previous critics, the glossy description of the nature of guilt and the content of debt

is apparent here. To be certain, Critchley develops the discussion initiated by Crowell. While

Crowell investigates the essential passivity from which fundamental normativity arises and

implicitly poses the question, 'why is there normativity rather than not?', Critchley delves into

the question by examining the ground of normativity – both everyday and fundamental – and

discovers a basic nullity from which normativity is possible. And yet, something remains

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[73] Critchley explores the question of guilt: "But what does Dasein's guilt really mean? It means that because Dasein's being is thrown projection, it always has its being to be. That is, Dasein's being is a lack, it is something *due* to Dasein, a debt that it strives to make up or repay. This is the ontological meaning of guilt as *Schuld*, which means guilt, wrong, or even sin, but can also mean debt. To be *schuldig* is to be guilty or blameworthy, but it also means to give someone their due, to be owing, to be in someone's debt." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 73)

[74] In Heidegger's words: "Though the call gives no information, it is not merely critical; it is *positive*, in that it discloses Dasein's most primordial potentiality-for-Being as Being-guilty. Thus conscience manifests itself as an *attestation* which belongs to Dasein's Being – an attestation in which conscience calls Dasein itself face to face with its ownmost potentiality-for-Being." (BT 334/SZ 288)

[75] Critchley contends: "Dasein is a double nothing, a double zero. This is the meaning of thrown projection. Guilt is the movement, the *kinesis* of this nullity, a movement *vor und zurück,* back and forth, or to and fro as Beckett would say. Such is the strangeness of what it means to be human, the uncanniness of being brought face to face with ourselves." (Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 77)

undisclosed, namely, why, exactly, *are* we guilty? What *exactly* is owed? Furthermore, given why we are guilty, what *should* we therefore be? In other words, the nature of guilt, the content of debt and the relation between the call of conscience and normativity has yet to be described. Another critic, Iain Macdonald,[76] *does* investigate these questions and argues that Heidegger's ontological understanding of normativity must be sought in the difference between what Dasein is and what Dasein can be.[77] More to the point, Macdonald emphasizes the difference as a *lack*. The lack is the difference that really matters in ontological normativity – the fact that Dasein is always a lack, or (as Macdonald emphasizes in Heidegger) "constantly lags behind its possibilities,"[78] or is always incomplete implies that Dasein is guilty of being incomplete and *crucially*, that it is *indebted* to fill the lack. Yet, because the lack *is* what we are (*i.e.,* incomplete, lagging behind our possibilities), we can never overcome our debt. Therefore, we are fundamentally guilty [*Schuldigsein*]. As Heidegger writes:

> Nevertheless, the idea of 'Guilty!' there lies the character of the "*not*". If the 'Guilty!' is something that can definitely apply to existence, then this raises the ontological problem of clarifying existentially the *character* of this "not" *as a* "*not*". Moreover, to the idea of 'Guilty!' belongs what is expressed without further differentiation in the conception of guilt as 'having responsibility for' – that is, as Being-the basis for… Hence we define the formally existential idea of the 'Guilty!' as "Being-the-basis

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[76] Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 6-21.

[77] Macdonald writes: "What characterizes guilt, then, is not failing to meet a standard or to respect a pre-existing norm, but rather a 'lack' – not in terms of a concrete lack of respect or what have you, but rather in terms of the ineliminable diference between what Dasein is *as it is* and *as it can be*. The lack in question lies in the difference between these two dimensions of Dasein's existence." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 12)

[78] BT 329/SZ 284

for a Being which has been defined by a 'not'" – that is to say, as "*Being-the-basis of a nullity*."[79]

Similar to Critchley, Macdonald describes the essential nullity of Dasein as extending between thrownness and projection.[80] We are not in control of the context within which we live, the possibilities that appear, or the possibilities that disappear. However, we *are* responsible for the way we relate to our passive thrownness and our circumscribed projects. In this way, although we are never entirely in control of ourselves or of our choices, and existence is ultimately unmasterable, we are nevertheless responsible for our unmasterable existence. Also similar to Critchley, Macdonald discusses the nullity of the gap between the possibilities that are actualized and the possibilities that are concealed. Since Dasein is the clearing of possibilities such that some possibilities can be picked out *as* possibilities while others are concealed as undifferentiated possibilities, Dasein *is* the nullity.[81] In other words, the call of conscience calls Dasein to what it *is not*, and what it *is not* is ultimately what Dasein *is*.[82]

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[79] BT 329/SZ 283

[80] Macdonald analyzes Heidegger's view of guilt: "[G]uilt is to be understood according to two equiprimordial aspects of Dasein's constitution: first, that it is a "thrown basis" or ground (*ein geworfener Grund*) in relation to its existence and possibilities: and second, that Dasein is essentially a "nullity" of itself (*eine Nichtigkeit seiner selbst*). As regards the first aspect, Being-a-thrown-basis, Heidegger brings Dasein's thrownness back into play: the idea that I am not in charge of all my possibilities – that it is not up to me that I was born here rather than there, that in this day and age certain things are possible that were not possible a hundred years ago, and so on; I am also not in control of whatever is lurking around the corner or lying in wait for me; some possibilities just arise or are imposed by circumstance. And yet I am at the center of how I deal with this thrownness, insofar as it is incumbent on me (and no one else) to engage with these possibilities that arise or that are given, to construe and 'arrange' them, to transform them, and to actualize some of them… Being-a-basis therefore implies a certain negativity, insofar as thrownness means that ther eis always a gap between what I am and what I can be, since what I can be is not entirely up to me, is not entirely in my power. Moreover, any actualization of possibility entails the foreclosure of other possibilities." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 13)

[81] Ibid., 13.

[82] As Heidegger explains: ""Being-a-basis" means *never* to have power over one's ownmost Being from the ground up. This "*not*" belongs to the existential meaning of "thrownness". It itself, being a basis, *is* a nullity of itself.

Here, Macdonald asserts the deeper point – a point that distinguishes him from earlier critics – namely, that insofar as Dasein *is* a nullity, and inasmuch as the call of conscience calls Dasein to itself (*i.e.,* to itself as a nullity), *Dasein is itself <u>only</u> when it relates to itself in terms of what it is not – and 'what it is not' is <u>not only</u> what Dasein is not or what it is not as such, but it is <u>also</u> what it <u>ought not</u> to be.*[83] Macdonald describes in clearer and more nuanced terms the nature of the 'not' and the nature of what we *should* be (in other words, Macdonald investigates the connection between ontological meaning understood as transcendence and ontological normativity). Not only is the paradox, as we discovered with Critchley, that we should be what we are not, but it is also, as Macdonald shows us, that we should be what we should *not* be. How can this be the case? There are at least two dimensions of the 'not' under consideration here. On an existentiell level, Dasein is for the most part undifferentiated, lost, forgotten, and *not* a self. Average everyday Dasein is *not* what it is, and thus, (since Dasein *should* be what it *is*) it is *not* what it *should* be. Since Dasein *is* for the most part a lost and forgotten self (*i.e.*, what it should *not* be), what Dasein *should not* be (the They-self) *is* a fundamental part of its being (*i.e.,* it is part of what Dasein *should* be). Thought in this fashion, Dasein *should* be what it *should not* be. Moreover, on an existential level, Dasein presses into possibility (*i.e.*, what *is* shown) as it forecloses other possibilities (*i.e.*, what is *not* shown). In this way Dasein is a nullity as it stands

"Nullity" does not signify anything like not-Being-present-at-hand or not-subsisting; what one has in view here is rather a "not" which is constitutive for this *Being* of Dasein – its thrownness. The character of this "not" as a "not" may be defined existentially: in being its *Self*, Dasein is, *as* a Self, the entity that has been thrown. It has been *released* from its basis, *not through* itself but *to* itself, so as to be *as this basis*. Dasein is not itself the basis of its Being, inasmuch as this basis first arises from its own projection, rather, as Being-its-Self, it is the *Being* of its basis. This basis is never anything but the basis for an entity whose Being has to take over Being-a-basis." (BT 330-331/SZ 284-285)

[83] Macdonald contends that Dasein is a nullity: "it is what it is only by relating itself to what it is not, that is, to what it can be (or can no longer be) – or even to what is not, and ought *not* to be." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 13)

in both the disclosure and closure of possibilities. Dasein *is* both what it *is* and what it is *not*. By extension, Dasein *must* be what it *is* and what it is *not*. To push the point further, Dasein *should* be what it *is*, which includes what it is *not*. Notice, however, the deeper paradox: since Dasein *is* what it is *not*, and since Dasein *should* be what it *is* and is *not* (and yet importantly, Dasein is *not* and *never will be* what it is *not*), Dasein *is* what it *should not* be. If Dasein *should* be what it *is* (and we now understand that what it *is* includes what it *should not* be), then Dasein *should* be what it *should not* be. To put it in other words, the call of conscience is a call we (necessarily and fundamentally) can never completely answer. Indeed, ontological normativity reveals that what we should be is what we are not *and* should not be, a point that clearly distinguishes Macdonald from pragmatist critics. A deeper sense of the paradox is thereby revealed.

Let us contextualize the discussion concretely. Take, for instance, our example of the multi-tasking mother once again. We determined that she is meaningful alongside the network of relations (Chapter 1), that within the web of relations some things are possible and others not (Chapter 2); from the things that are not possible, possibilities arise. The call of conscience, then, appears in the gap between the possibilities that appear to the woman and the possibilities that disappear. The call is called *from* the self who has been forgotten, the self who understands there is more than what appears, more than the world, more than the ordinary life process. Another way to put it is that the call comes from the self who understands that the multi-faceted possibilities as mother, woman, and manager are only part of a play of possibilities that are hidden from the view of ordinary thinking; this self understands that the multi-faceted possibilities are average possibilities (before they have been differentiated), and not within her control – she does not choose to appropriate the world of possibilities, but rather she is appropriated by it. She can of course choose to be a certain type of mother, woman and manager,

but her average possibilities are circumscribed beforehand by the history and legacy of mothers, women, and managers. Thus, the call of conscience is called by the self who understands that life is not an intentional act of appropriation, but rather a passive process of being deployed (a process disrupted by the call of conscience).

To whom does the call of conscience call? The woman is called in her ordinary, multi-tasking life (the lost or fallen they-self); the call from the self is made to the undifferentiated self who takes for granted the correctness of the apparent natural order of things, and whose ordinary thinking construes the world as a place to be mastered. The call is a call of conscience because the lost self is guilty of forgetting the hidden self – the woman is guilty of blocking possibility by the stasis of her ordinary thinking. She is guilty of forgetting what she ought to be, which is to say, she is guilty of forgetting what she is – she *is* (already) what she ought to be, but her forgetfulness conceals the truth of her being. In this way, she is guilty of not being what she ought to be. Another way to put it is to say that she already *is* what she is *not* – the forgotten self, the nullity of concealed possibilities, the nothing of death, what she should and should not be, the 'not'. She is guilty of not choosing to be what she already is (not). Interestingly, once she hears the call of conscience, the woman's life might not change on the surface; she might continue to be the same sort of mother, woman and manager. The *meaning* of her possibility, however, *does* fundamentally change. She understands that the different modes of her life are roles she fulfills rather than chooses, that these roles are only a few possibilities amongst many, and that what she ultimately is *is* not what she should be; the disclosure of her facticity fundamentally changes the way she relates to herself and her possibility. Nevertheless, she remains guilty of not being what she ought to be (and even what she ought not to be), but now she knows it. In short, she is guilty

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of her incompletion. In understanding her guilt, she chooses to be responsible for her passivity and for the debt she owes to herself and to the happening of life that *is* the granting of possibility.

In a sense, Macdonald picks up where Crowell and Critchley left off and brings our path of investigation into contact with the 'not' once again.[84] Along the path of our discussion, two important and interrelated points have developed, one concerning meaning and the other regarding transcendence. First, ontological or fundamental normativity is essentially linked to our discussion of the meaning of 'meaning'. What we should be is not so much what we think we can be (given real possibilities) or what we are most of the time (given average everydayness). Rather, what we *should* be is what we (always already) *are* fundamentally speaking. Moreover, given our self-nullification, we are basically what we are *not*. Meaning is thus found in the disclosure of our passive deliverance to the self-nullifying process of existence; or in other words, meaning is the revealing of concealing. Fundamental normativity is characterized by passivity more than activity inasmuch as what we should be is what we are not (and therefore something over which we have no control). In this way, Heidegger introduces an ontological (*i.e.,* notably different from pragmatic) way of thinking about normativity and what we should be – a difference further emphasized by Macdonald's point that what is *not* includes what we *should not* be. Crucially, although we are not in control of what we are, we can determine how we relate to what we are – an authentic relation opened by the call of conscience.

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[84] Macdonald not only clarifies the investigation into the passivity of the call of conscience, but he also implicitly responds to Beatrice Han-Pile's discussion of choice and the self in the freedom to choose oneself. Macdonald contends that the self who calls is not the self who hears the call. Therefore, just as Han-Pile asserts, Macdonald argues that the call of conscience is not a matter of self-relation. However, unlike Han-Pile who describes the calling and summoned selves as modified versions of each other (i.e. in terms of the shifting nature of selfhood), Macdonald interprets the selves in terms of possibility. He argues that the self who calls is the self who is *not yet* or *not*, or in other words, the self who calls is the gap between what Dasein is and what it can be. To use a term discussed in the previous chapter, the self who calls is the clearing of possibility *as such*.

Therefore, the call of conscience opens the possibility of being responsible for how we relate to what we *are not*, a topic we will investigate in the next chapter. Since the gap between what we are and what we are not is one way to understand the meaning of 'meaning', the call of conscience opens the possibility of being responsible for how we relate to meaning. In other words, the call of conscience is the gap within which fundamental meaning can appear. To recall our discussion in the first chapter, meaning was disclosed as neither activity nor passivity, as neither what I can do nor what can be done to me, but in the pervasive transcendence that subtends activity and passivity; in effect, *meaning is the possibility (to be more than what something is) that pervades all forms of life*.

We begin to see the connection between meaning and normativity. Just as there are different levels of normativity (for example, average everyday and fundamental), there are different levels of meaning (accordingly, average everyday and fundamental). Fundamental normativity is the ground of all other types of normativity, and can be understood as a call to be what we are (which implies a call to be what we are not). Likewise, fundamental meaning is the ground of all other types of meaning, and can be understood as the possibility to be what we are not. Ultimately, then, what we *are* appears from what we *are not*, or in other words, what we are *not* (which is our *fundamental meaning*) is (the *normative* standard of) what we *should* be.[85]

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[85] As Macdonald writes: "It is important to point here how the self-relation of the call of conscience avoids simple self-identity. The self-relation that characterizes the call is not strictly one of self-identity, because the Dasein who calls is *not* the Dasein who hears the call; rather, the Dasein who calls is a Dasein who is *not*, or rather *not yet*. Certainly, this 'not' that is at the heart of the concept of guilt, or the gap between Dasein *as it is* and *as it can be*, is the inevitable condition of existence in general (by Heidegger's definition of existence); but more specifically, it is also the inevitable condition of responsibility. *To exist is to be responsible for the nexus of possibility that I am.* (my emphasis)… [Indeed], the self-relation of conscience is not a simple relation of identity, since Dasein's distance from itself in conscience relies precisely *on the lack of identity* between who I am and who I can be. Conscience and guilt therefore express the general possibility of positing a norm in the concrete act of taking responsibility. The norm will always be more or less concrete or existentielly replete, but that there can be any normativity *at all*

Second, ontological normativity is also inextricably bound to the transcendence of Dasein. Or to put it in the form of a problem, the question concerning normativity is connected to the problem of transcendence. The problem of how we should understand what we *should* be (which appears in the gap between what we are and what we are not) is characterized by the problem of describing the fact we are always *more* than what we *actually are*. In short, normativity implies transcendence. Therefore, the process of transcendence is the ground of normativity, and beyond that, it is the basic character of meaning. In other words, the question of what we *should* be (a normative claim) shows us what we fundamentally are (our basic meaning), which is something that we are not (the basic character of transcendence). The disclosure that we should be what we are not is one way to understand the transcendence of Dasein. Investigating the ontological normativity of the call of conscience is one way to explore the problem of transcendence and the possibility of the transcendence of Dasein (*i.e.,* the disclosure that Dasein should be what it is *not* reveals the fact that Dasein is always more than it is).

To break down the levels of possibility and normativity, then, humans can choose possibility from a circumscribed field of possibility; the field is what humans necessarily *are* and therefore what they *ought* to be in their ordinary lives – this is the average everyday, existentiell, or banal, level of normativity. However, the fact that certain possibilities appear while others are hidden shows us that there is a gap between what humans are and what they can and should be – it shows us there is a gap between banal and fundamental possibility. The gap is the 'not' or the space of ontological normativity – what humans *ought* to be *as such*. In other words, the gap is

depends on the possibility of individual Dasein drawing distinction between what *is*, on the one hand, and what *can be*, or, perhaps more directly: what *ought to be*, on the other." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 14)

the condition of possibility for possibility *as such*.[86] The crucial point is that the call of

conscience reveals the fact that Dasein is itself the deployment of its own normativity and is

responsible for how it determines its norms (in the average everyday).[87] Ontological normativity

can therefore be expressed as the fact that being is an issue for Dasein, and that in its concern,

Dasein *must* press into some possibilities and not others, and yet it is guilty of *not* disclosing its

other possibilities, indeed, those *other* (concealed) possibilities from which Dasein's (revealed)

possibilities *are* possible. [88] The call of conscience does not only call the individual back to itself,

but discloses a deeper level of possibility from which the individual *can* be called and *can be* at

all.[89] The early Heidegger's discussion of the call of conscience arguably hints at what the later

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[86] As Macdonald puts it: "On the one hand, conscience and guilt make explicit a formal, absolutely necessary structure of experience. But on the other hand, the Self of Dasein is not a pure, point-like, self-identical Self; it is rather a self divided, pitted against itself (its they-self) as it sorts through its existentiell possibilities. In other words, Dasein's self-identity contains an irreducible moment of negativity, of non-identity, in the form of this gap between what Dasein is and what it can or ought to be. The gap is neither bridgeable nor fillable, and the difference it makes essential to existence always remains, no matter how Dasein pursues its projects." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 15)

[87] Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 15.

[88] Macdonald clearly explains Heidegger's notion of (ontological) normativity: "Now, it seems clear enough that this distinction needs to be understood *normatively*, as one between what *is* and what *ought to be*, even though this is not quite how Heidegger puts it, because for existing Dasein what it merely *can be* may not concern it at all (in the sense of being merely logically or metaphysically possible, e.g., it is possible for me to become the king of France). To say that Dasein is the being for whom, "in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it," is just to say that it is not primarily concerned with indifferent possibilities (mere possibility), but with *its* possibilities, those which it chooses or accepts as imposed, with the understanding that it has not got power over all possibility. The possibilities it seizes on are therefore precisely those which for it *ought to be*, and so the call of conscience, or the *self-appraisal* of something being needful, is also the impetus to actualize what ought to be. Conscience makes explicit the fact that Dasein sets its own norms for action and is responsible for doing so in both the authorial and the moral sense of the word. The irreducible and necessary distinction that is at the core of the call of conscience, then, between what *is* and what *is not* but *ought to be*, is of a piece with both existence in the Heideggerian sense and normativity in general." (Macdonald, "Ethics and Authenticity," 14-15)

[89] Heidegger writes: "Conscience is the call of care from the uncanniness of Being-in-the-world – the call which summons Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-guilty." (BT 335/SZ 289)

Heidegger describes as *Ereignis*. However, to make the argument clear, we must investigate in more detail how the early Heidegger describes the 'not'.

Section 3: Why not nothing?

In the mood of anxiety, a silent call emerges – the call of conscience. Although anxious, the call is neither fearful nor necessarily tumultuous; the call is calm, quiet, and can be even joyful.[90] The call of conscience liberates us from self-evidence, and heralds a fundamental level of transcendence, a transcendence that knows itself to be transcendent (as opposed to average everyday or banal transcendence, which does not know itself to be transcendent). The call is called *from* the forgotten and concealed self *to* the lost, everyday self,[91] and reveals for the first time two basic modes of possibility: inauthentic being (the self that does not understand it is lost), and authentic being (the self that understands it is lost most of the time). In this way, the call of conscience is the condition of possibility of inauthenticity and authenticity.[92] The silence of the call reveals a basic character of being: guilt. We are guilty of not being what we should be – *i.e.,* our forgotten selves, our concealed possibilities, what we are not and should (not) be. The call summons us to face our guilt, it summons us to ask – *Why are we necessarily guilty? Why*

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[90] As Capobianco writes: "In Heidegger's description, the mood of Angst is one of quiet and calm – not at all opposed to joy, as he says – which at the end of the lecture he even characterizes as 'wonder' (*Verwunderung*)." (Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 77) Capobianco's raises the point to postulate that perhaps Heidegger's "discussion of Angst present us with an important clue that he was perhaps *already* thinking beyond the phenomenon of Angst in seeking to name the mood that fundamentally defines Dasein's authentic existence." (77) The issue is interesting, and one I raise again later in the section; in effect, similar to Capobianco's idea concerning anxiety, I propose that Heidegger's use of the nothing in "What is Metaphysics?" already bears within it the seeds of his later ideas, namely, traces of the historical-situatedness of *Ereignis*.

[91] Heidegger describes anxiety in the following way: "Anxiety thus takes away from Dasein the possibility of understanding itself, as it falls, in terms of the 'world' and the way things have been publicly interpreted. Anxiety throws Dasein back upon that which it is anxious about – its authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world. Anxiety individualizes Dasein for its ownmost Being-in-the-world, which as something that understands, projects itself essentially upon possibilities." (BT 232/SZ 187)

[92] In a helpful distinction, Hubert Dreyfus describes the mode within which neither authentic *nor* inauthentic being are possibilities as an undifferentiated mode: "Thus undifferentiated Dasein literally has no choice, it has always already yielded to the pull away from primordiality." (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 236)

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are we not what we should be? How are we meaningful (as incomplete beings)? Why is there

meaning? Why is there meaning rather than nothing? Why is there not nothing?[93] The questions

are revealing: in the call of conscience, we discover the ontological difference (the gap between

what is and what is not)[94] as it relates to ontological normativity (the gap between what we are

and what we should be) and how meaning and normativity relate to the problem of

transcendence (the paradoxical fact that we are always more than we are inasmuch as we *are*

what we are *not*).[95] Clearly, the 'not' is a pervasive part of my investigation into normativity,

meaning and transcendence. Thus, it is necessary to re-enter into an examination of the 'not' as it

intersects with the nothing in the early Heidegger while bearing in mind the later Heidegger's

discussion of *Ereignis*. To be clear, the primary goal of the present section is to explore and

hopefully elucidate the levels of primordiality of the nothing. In a secondary manner, our

discussion will shed light on our previous discussion of ontological normativity. Although

Heidegger does not refer to existentiell, existential, and ontological levels of nothing, I will argue

that the levels of nothing are part of the basic character of transcendence pervading all levels of

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[93] Heidegger describes the 'why' of the nothing: "Only because the nothing is manifest in the ground of Dasein can the total strangeness of beings overwhelm us. Only when the strangeness of beings oppresses us does it arouse and evoke wonder. Only on the ground of wonder – the revelation of the nothing – does the "why?" loom before us. Only because the "why" is possible as such can we in a definite way inquire into grounds, and ground them. Only because we can inquire and ground is the destiny of our existence place in the hands of the researcher. The question of the nothing puts us, the questioners, in question." (WM 109)

[94] As Pöggeler writes: "*Was ist Metaphysik?* grasps transcendence, the realization of the ontological difference, as the heart of metaphysics. The step beyond (*meta*) beings is understood as the being-held-out into the Nothing." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 74)

[95] As Pöggeler describes the intersection between ontological normativity and the nothing: "Resoluteness, for example, is indeed in *Sein und Zeit* not thought of as the representing and willing of what is permanent; nevertheless it is thought of as a willing, namely as the wanting-to-have-a-conscience in which Dasein chooses itself and thus appropriates its nullity or "guilt." The willing of metaphysics, the grasp for permanent ground, is already broken down, but the overcoming will first still lead through the most extreme decisions in favor of this willing. The "choice" of self in the "boldness" of "anxiety," in which Dasein even in inescapability and powerlessness still tries to assert its power, will become the self-assertion in the fact of the "Nothing."" (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 138)

meaning. Furthermore, the transcendence of (all levels of) meaning is revealed through (the corresponding levels of) normativity.

The question concerning the nothing [*Nichts*] and the 'not' [*Nicht*] in the early Heidegger is most extensively discussed in his 1929 inaugural lecture to the Freiburg University faculties, entitled, "What is Metaphysics?" Arguably, the lecture reveals a connection between Heidegger's ideas developed in *Being and Time* and his later works,[96] and yet distinguishes itself in the way it treats and thematizes the question concerning non-being. In his address, Heidegger raises the question, why is there being rather than nothing? As Heidegger puts it, "[how] is it with the nothing?"[97] Even before we begin to explore the question concerning the nothing, an issue arises, namely, how do we think the nothing?[98] How can we think about the nothing when all thinking is intentional (*i.e.,* directed towards *something*)?[99] The paradox is explicit in the

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[96] As William Richardson argues, "Here Heidegger crystallizes once more the essential elements of the thought so carefully elaborated in SZ, with the result that in a genuine sense we may say that WM offers no doctrine of importance that is new. And yet there is a profound difference of perspective from that of SZ, which must be noted and emphatically stressed, if we are to discern the evolution that already has begun. What most especially characterizes WM is the question of Non-being (*Nichts*)." (Richardson, *Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 194)

[97] WM 96

[98] The difficulty of the question is the reason Rudolph Carnap, for example, famously dismisses the meaningfulness of the question in his essay "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language". See chapter 1 for a discussion of Carnap's argument. See also Stanley Rosen's "Thinking about Nothing" (Stanley Rosen, "Thinking about Nothing," in *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, 116-137 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978)) for a contrasting perspective on Heidegger's discussion of the nothing. The only caveat I will mention is that, although clear in its intentions to challenge analytic philosophers who dismiss Heidegger's discussion of the nothing, Rosen's article does not directly engage with Heidegger's text and therefore sometimes seems less than exacting. Rosen does, however, state his decision not to cite Heidegger's texts at the outset of the essay.

[99] Heidegger investigates the nothing: "For the nothing is the negation of the totality of beings; it is nonbeing pure and simple. But with that we bring the nothing under the higher determination of the negative, viewing it as the negated. However, according to the reigning and never-challenged doctrine of "logic," negation is a specific act of the intellect. How then can we in our question of the nothing, indeed in the question of its questionability, wish to brush the intellect aside? Are we altogether sure about what we are presupposing in this matter? Do not the "not," negatedness, and thereby negation too represent the higher determination under which the nothing falls as a

problem: how can we bring the nothing into view such that we can describe it and investigate it?[100] The way into the problem, argues Heidegger, is through ground moods such as *anxiety*.[101] As we previously discussed, the nothing is intimated in anxiety – that is, the nothing of the world (*i.e.,* the existentiell nothing of the network of relations)[102] and the nothing of death (*i.e., the* existential nothing of the possibility of impossibility of existence).[103] However, Heidegger now seems to suggest another level of nothingness when he contends that "the nothing is the complete negation of the totality of beings; it is nonbeing pure and simple."[104] In this case, the nothing is not only a character of the world, it is not only the possibility of impossibility, but the nothing is also (and more fundamentally speaking) the possibility of possibility *as such* (*i.e.,* the possibility of being rather than nothing: non-being).[105] As one critic puts it, "the Nothing is another name

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particular kind of negated matter? Is the nothing given only because the "not," i.e., negation, is given? Or is it the other way around? Are negation and the "not" given only because the nothing is given? That has not been decided; it has not even been raised expressly as a question. We assert that the nothing is more original than the "not" and negation." (WM 97)

[100] As Heidegger concedes: "If this thesis is right, then the possibility of negation as an act of the intellect, and thereby the intellect itself, are somehow dependent upon the nothing. Then how can the intellect hope to decide about the nothing? Does the ostensible absurdity of question and answer with respect to the nothing in the end rest solely in a blind conceit of the far-ranging intellect?" (WM 98)

[101] Heidegger also suggests joy and boredom as possible ground moods (WM 99)

[102] As Heidegger writes, "the "nothing" – that is, the world as such." (BT 232/SZ 187)

[103] Heidegger writes of anxiety, "Dasein finds itself *face to face* with the "nothing" of the possible impossibility of existence." (BT 310/SZ 266)

[104] WM 97

[105] Pöggeler describes the fundamental nature of the question: "The question, "Why is there anything at all rather than nothing?" is metaphysics' fundamental question because it once more questions the heart of metaphysics – the manifestness of beings and transcendence as the holding open of this manifestness – and also makes its "essence" questionable again. Thus the basis of metaphysics, the sense or the truth of Being, comes before thinking." (Pöggeler, Path of Thinking, 75)

for Being itself."[106] Correspondingly, Heidegger asserts "that the nothing is more original than the "not" and negation."[107] Therefore, anxiety not only reveals the nothing of the world and the nothing of death, but also "[a]nxiety reveals the nothing,"[108] *i.e.,* non-being, *as such*.

Remark the primordiality of disclosure: the (existentiell) nothing of the world remains hidden within its significant network of relations and is only revealed alongside the disclosure of the (existential) nothing of death; furthermore, since the (existential) nothing of death is itself a possibility of being, it intimates the more fundamental, self-secluding (ontological) nothing *as such* – that which is beyond, or *transcends*, possibility.[109] Heidegger contends that the ontological nothing is the ground from which being *as such* appears. Thus, the nothing *as such* can only be thought or only appears when existential nothingness first appears *as* possibility.[110] Heidegger writes:

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[106] The fuller quote from Capobianco is: "In ["What is Metaphysics?"], [Heidegger] is interested in how Angst brings Dasein face to face with *das Nichts*, the Nothing, the No-thing that allows all forms of beings to appear. He emphasizes that by the Nothing he does not mean the simple negation of all beings; rather, the Nothing is another name for Being itself, if only we are mindful that Being itself is what allows all beings to shine forth, to appear, to 'be.' Whereas other moods bring Dasein in relation to other beings or even to the totality of beings, it is principally the mood of Angst that brings Dasein face to face with the Nothing itself (Being itself)." (Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, 75)

[107] WM 97

[108] WM 101

[109] Heidegger writes: "In the clear night of the nothing of anxiety the original openness of beings as such arises: that they are beings – and not nothing." (WM 103) And a little later on the same page, he writes: "Only on the ground of the original revelation of the nothing can human existence approach and penetrate beings. But since existence in its essence relates itself to beings – those which it is not and that which it is – emerges as such existence in each case from the nothing already revealed." (WM 103)

[110] Heidegger describes the relation between the nothing and anxiety: "The nothing reveals itself in anxiety – but not as a being. Just as little is it given as an object. Anxiety is no kind of grasping of the nothing. All the same, the nothing reveals itself in and through anxiety, although, to repeat, not in such a way that the nothing becomes manifest in our malaise quite apart from beings as a whole. Rather, we said that in anxiety the nothing is encountered at one with beings as a whole." (WM 102)

"For human existence, the nothing makes possible the openedness of beings as such. The nothing does not merely serve as the counterconcept of beings; rather, it originally belongs to their essential unfolding as such. In the Being of beings the nihilation of the nothing occurs."[111]

In other words, the nihilation of the nothing is one way to *describe* the fact that life is always already in the process of pressing into possibilities, and therefore pushing away, or clearing, or repelling, or nihilating the nothing (*i.e., other* possibilities). Life is a process of self-seclusion, a clearing in which the event of discovering always already happens. In this way, life preserves the fact that there *is* something rather than nothing. The appropriation of possibility (*i.e.,* the deployment of being) is preserved by the refusal of other possibilities (*i.e.,* the withdrawal of the 'not'); and yet, pushing deeper, we discover that underpinning the refusal of the 'not' is a primordial non-being – the nothing *as such*. The primordiality of nothingness can therefore be broken down in the following way: the ontological nothing (the nothing from which the life process appears *as such*) is revealed in the fact that there *are* possibilities, which is to say the ontological nothing is revealed in the clearing of the 'not' (the self-secluding gap between, on the one hand, the possibilities that are cleared and can be determined *as* possibilities, and, on the other hand, the non-determinable possibilities that are cleared away and are *not* possibilities). Although Heidegger suggests that the nothing is more fundamental than the 'not', the nothing (or more precisely the fact that there is being rather than nothing) can only appear when the *fact* that there *are* concealed possibilities is revealed – that is, the nothing is resonated by the 'not'.[112]

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[111] WM 104

[112] Heidegger's description of the resonating is helpful here: "To make appear by way of recollecting the concealed power of this forgottenness *as* forgottenness and to bring forth therein the resonating of beyng. The *recognition* of the plight." (CP 85/BZP 108)

Moreover, and this is the point that connects the nothing *as such* to the 'not' of the call of conscience and to Dasein's potential for authentic being, both the nothing and the not (both the fact that there *are* possibilities and the fact that *some* possibilities are possible and not others) are revealed by the being for whom possibilities *are* possible. Indeed, the nothing and the 'not' can only be disclosed by the being that clears possibility such that some possibilities *are* picked out and others are *not* – this being is Dasein.[113] In short, the call of conscience frees Dasein such that it can throw off its thrownness to reveal the nihilation of the nothing. As one critic puts it, the nothing retrieves the uncanny of being.[114]

If we take a step back and reinterpret the nothing in terms of Heidegger's later discussion of *Ereignis*, we can perhaps further develop our description of the elusive concept. When we consider how *Ereignis* might relate to anxiety (*i.e.,* if we think about authentic being in its historical situatedness), we discover that differentiated Dasein is *itself* a clearing of possibility appropriated by the historical process; authentic understanding is *also* swept up in the sway of

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[113] Heidegger describes the primordiality of nothingness: "What testifies to the constant and widespread though distorted revelation of the nothing gin our existence more compellingly than negation? But negation does not conjure the "not" out of itself as a means for making distinctions and oppositions in whatever is given, inserting itself, as it were, in between what is given. How could negation produce the not from itself when it can make denials only when something deniable is already granted to it? But how could the deniable and what is to be denied be viewed as something susceptible to the not unless all thinking as such has caught sight of the not already? But the not can become manifest only when its origin, the nihilation of the nothing in general, and therewith the nothing itself, is disengaged from concealment. The not does not originate through negation; rather, negation is grounded in the not that springs from the nihilation of the nothing. But negation is also only one way of nihilating, that is, only sort of behavior that has been grounded beforehand in the nihilation of the nothing." (WM 104-105)

[114] As Pöggeler explains: "The Nothing reveals itself in essential anxiety as the nihilation of every being. In anxiety, all beings slip away, yet by means of this nihilation (not annihilation) they can show themselves in the utter strangeness of the fact that they are and that it is not the case that they are not. Nihilation takes away from Dasein beings as self-evident, familiar, and at one's disposal in order to give these beings back to it in the strangeness of "Being" which stimulates "wonder." The Nothing of nihilation thus enables the manifestation of beings *as* beings and thereby the realization of transcendence, the "metaphysical" going beyond, which goes beyond beings in order to be able to receive them back as that which has become manifest in its Being." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 74)

the event of history. In point of fact, anxiety is the mood from which meaning and the nothing

can be thought, but more than that – and this is the real connection between the early

Heidegger's discussion of the nothing and the later Heidegger's discussion of *Ereignis* – ground

moods are the context in which Dasein encounters possibility *as* possibility (existential,

ontological *and* historical) for the first time. In the call of conscience, as Dasein is "suspended

between two nothings, two nullities"[115] the possibility of thinking being as an ontological

structure suspended in time and delivered by history first appears, a possibility freed by the

refusal of being. To recall our investigation in the previous chapter, the possibility to free

thought from the history of philosophy such that it can think being arises from the refusal of non-

being (a refusal characterized by the resistance to thinking and being). As Heidegger contends,

Ereignis is "hesitant denial as (refusal)"; it is the "negative in beyng; and the oscillation; *in strife*

(beyng or nonbeing [*Nichtsein*])."[116] *Ereignis* is not just a historical happening of life, nor is it

merely a way to think about the historical situatedness of meaning. *Ereignis* is a historico-

ontological *way of thinking* that frees thinking, being and history (and the thinking *of* being and

history) for the first time.[117] Thus, to bring our discussion back to bear on the nothing, the

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[115] Critchley, "The null basis-being of a nullity," 75.

[116] CP 25/BZP 28-30

[117] Heidegger describes the historicity of Dasein: "History is not taken here as one domain of beings among other domains; instead, it exclusively has in view the essential occurrence of beyng itself. Thus already in *Being and Tiem* the historicality of Da-sein is to be understood only in terms of the fundamental ontology pursued there and not as a contribution to any extant philosophy of history." (CP 27/BZP 31-32) Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann describes the thinking of *Ereignis*: "The work-character peculiar to *Contributions* is determined by the matter of being-hsitorical thinking. This thinking is not a "thinking about" enowning. As the matter for this thinking and as the historical essential swaying of the truth of be-ing, enowning does not stand "over againast" this thinking. Rather, enowning-historical thinking itself belongs to the historical essential swaying of the truth of be-ing as enowning." (von Hermann, "Enowning-Historical Thinking," 106)

nothing (disclosed by the call of conscience, a call called in anxiety) releases the transcendence of meaning to be thought as a historically delivered event.

In summary, the nothing is not only revealed by authentic being (who understands its transcendence and chooses to be what it *is*, *i.e.,* what it *is not*, its non-being), but it is also revealed by *Ereignis* (understood as a way of thinking meaning as a historical happening), which appropriates one possible history of thought, and conceals an unmasterable play of other possibilities (*i.e., other* histories, non-history). Only Dasein – the being for whom the event of *Ereignis is* an event – can think *Ereignis*. In this way, thinking *Ereignis* presupposes that we encounter authentic possibility. As Heidegger writes:

> "Be-ing (as enowning) needs beings so that be-ing may hold sway. Beings do not need be-ing in the same way. Beings can still "be" in the abandonment of being, under whose dominance the *immediate* availability and usefulness and serviceability of every kind (e.g., everything must serve the people) obviously make up *what is a being* and what is not."[118]

Once again, we discover a pervasive passivity characterizing life: even the authentic being of Dasein is itself deployed from a historical-process, even anxiety and the differentiation and mineness of death are meaningful given the facticity of historicity. If we try to describe the passivity in concrete terms, the choice to choose differentiation is not so much the active choice to choose myself as it is the choice to embrace my deliverance to a historical path in which my own death is enfolded into the preservation process. The point is, in anxiety, I am not only faced with the nothing of the mineness of my own death, I also encounter a deeper point, one that

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[118] CP 26/BZP 30-31

transcends and subtends even my own death – after all, even death (*i.e.,* how we understand it, how we come to face its differentiation, that it *is* differentiating, that it *is* at all) is granted and deployed by the historical event of life. One way to put it is, then, in anxiety I encounter my participation in the contingency of being. If I press deeper into the fact that there *is* something rather than nothing, I discover *I* am something rather than nothing, and the fact of my being is only one small possibility amongst an unmasterable play of other possibilities in which I could have been cleared into non-being (or into another contingent form of being). I could be nothing rather than something, and this is true of all things – people, things, ideas, and the happening of history from which all things arise. Although I do not choose or control the event of being that *is* (and likewise I do not choose or control non-being), I participate in it, and I participate in its truth as disclosure.[119]

With this in mind, perhaps we can now understand what Heidegger means at the end of his 1929 lecture when he states:

> "So long as man exists, philosophizing of some sort occurs. Philosophy
> – what we call philosophy – is metaphysics' getting under way, in which
> philosophy comes to itself and to its explicit tasks. Philosophy gets under
> way only by a peculiar insertion of our own existence into the
> fundamental possibilities of Dasein as a whole. For this insertion it is of
> decisive importance, first, that we allow space for beings as a whole;
> second, that we release ourselves into the nothing, which is to say, that
> we liberate ourselves from those idols everyone has and to which they are
> wont to go cringing; and finally, that we let the sweep of our suspense

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[119] Heidegger describes the event of being: "The even of appropriation is original history itself, which could suggest that here the essence of beyng is grasped altogether "historically… This original concept of history first grants us the domain in which it is shown why and how history is "more" than action and will. "Destiny" also belongs to history and does not exhaust the essence of history." (CP 27-28/BZP 32-34)

take its full course, so that it swings back into the basic question of metaphysics which the nothing itself compels: Why are there beings at all, and why not rather nothing?" [120]

Philosophy and man have always co-existed – history *is* the history of philosophy. To release ourselves from being thought *by* the history of philosophy that *is*, a history wrought with misunderstanding and self-closure, we must insert ourselves into history. Our insertion is opened by the call of conscience, which calls us back to what we *must* be, and clears the possibility of re-thinking the meaning of being in terms of possibility *as such*, that is, in terms of the nothing and the basic transcendence of being. The possibility frees us to think of existence as granted from the historical happening of being, *Ereignis*, the grounding event, which shows us the way to the basic question: why is there being rather than nothing?

But how does this connect to ontological normativity? Arguably, thinking the problem of the nothing is what we *must* do. The 'must' here is similar to the call of conscience and its summons to what we *must* be. We *must* think the problem because, in a sense, we *are* the problem. In every daily action, at every level of life, we work through the problem; we pose it implicitly (and explicitly) to ourselves as a recurring theme. As we press into (even ordinary) possibilities (possibilities granted from the refusal of non-being, a refusal that preserves and tacitly shows us that there *is* being rather than *nothing*) we surpass ourselves, we transcend. We are being rather than non-being, meaningful rather than unmeaningful, living a life that matters in a significant world rather than not; we are these things because we *must* be – it is not something we choose. To be certain, we *can choose* to be aware of the basic contingency of life, to understand and accept our passivity, to remember to be responsible for our ordinary

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[120] WM 110

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forgetfulness – all this too is part of our possibilities, possibilities that we are not most of the time. But the choice to choose ourselves does not deliver us from our passive deliverance. The choice is to choose to be delivered as deliverance. Thus, what we *are* is what we are *not* and *must* be, but we can choose to understand that we are *not* what we *should* be, and in that way, we can choose to be what we must be – *i.e.,* we can choose to understand the fact of our *being* rather than *nothing* – and this is what we should be. Thus, one way to understand ontological normativity is as the basic fact that we *must be* rather than *not*.[121]

To relate our discussion back to the problem of transcendence, only a Dasein that understands itself as self-transcending can think the transcendence of being and the other beginning of philosophy (*i.e.,* the transcendence of being presupposes the transcendence of Dasein). Moreover, the transcendence of being can only be thought as part of the disclosure of the happening of history (*i.e., Ereignis* is one way to think the transcendence of being). The disclosure of the happening of history reveals that there is something rather than nothing, indeed, *a* history rather than *not* or rather than *nothing* (*i.e., Ereignis* reveals the ontological nothing). In this way, investigating the nothing is essential to revealing the transcendence of being (as it occurs in the happening of history). In other words, *in order to disclose the other beginning of philosophy, we must first understand that being is only one possibility among many, and among these other possibilities is the possibility that there is nothing (determinate and meaningful)*

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[121] Heidegger describes inceptual thinking: "Restraint is the style of inceptual thinking only because it must become the style of future humanity grounded in Da-sein, i.e., only because it bears this grounding and is its pervasive disposition… This restraint alone can gather humans and human assemblies to themselves, i.e., into the destiny of their assignment: the enduring of the last god." (CP 28-29/BZP 33-35)

rather than something (determinate and meaningful).[122] Therefore, another way to put the transcendent character of meaning is to say that we are meaningful insofar as we are *more* than what we *are* inasmuch as we *are not nothing* – since we are not nothing, we are transcendent. As Heidegger writes:

> "Holding itself out into the nothing, Dasein is in each case already beyond beings as a whole. This being beyond beings we call "transcendence." If in the ground of its essence Dasein were not transcending, which now means, if it were not in advance holding itself out into the nothing, then it could never be related to beings nor even to itself. Without the original revelation of the nothing, no selfhood and no freedom."[123]

Conclusion:

The path so far has shown that the meaning of 'meaning' is found neither in the activity of understanding the world nor in the passivity of discovering a significant world, but in the basic transcendence that characterizes existence – things are always more than they actually are. We discovered that the early Heidegger is interested in describing the conditions of possibility of existence (which will ultimately lead us to time), and the later Heidegger is concerned with time as it is appropriated by history. More to the point, the later Heidegger is interested in the event or happening of history as it grants life and deploys life for its preservation. Notably, both the early and the later Heidegger are ultimately concerned with the problem of transcendence. Arguably, however, the early Heidegger is more explicitly concerned with the transcendence of Dasein; he

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[122] As Heidegger writes: "Being held out into the nothing – as Dasein is – on the ground of concealed anxiety is its surpassing of beings as a whole. It is transcendence." (WM 106)

[123] WM 103

is perhaps more concerned with the fact that Dasein is always more than it actually is, and has the possibility of becoming aware of its self-transcending character. The later Heidegger, on the other hand, is perhaps more obviously interested in the happening of life as it is granted by history, and in the fact that history has granted only one way of thinking about meaning, a way that conceals other ways of thinking about meaning. In this sense, the later Heidegger's interest in history as the granting or happening of being exemplifies his continued interest in the problem of transcendence and, more specifically, his interest in the transcendence of being (*i.e.,* in the surpassing of our way, or history's way, of thinking about the meaning of being).[124]

Ultimately, the two instances of transcendence are interrelated and thought within the *problem* of transcendence – *i.e.,* how to understand and describe the character of something that is always more than it is. To break the point down further, Heidegger reveals that Dasein *can* understand its basic character of transcendence, and thereby Dasein can *transcend* itself (*i.e.,* he reveals the transcendence of Dasein). Moreover, Heidegger shows us that the transcendence of Dasein (*i.e.,* the self-understanding that we are always more than what we are and what we are *is* what we are not) is part of the transcendence of being – in order to understand transcendence *as such*, we must understand the site from which transcendence is first understood. In other words, in order to reveal the other beginning of philosophy, we must first investigate the being who thinks philosophy and for whom philosophy matters (*i.e.,* to reveal *Ereignis*, we must first disclose temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*]). Thus, the transcendence of Dasein is a necessary step

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[124] As Heidegger already intimates in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, transcendence is not that towards which I overstep, but rather "the *genuine ontological sense of transcendence* [is]… *that which oversteps as such*." (BPP 299/ GP 424-425)

towards the transcendence of being, and both features of transcendence are thought within the basic problem of transcendence. [125]

We also discovered that the problem of transcendence is related to or revealed in the question concerning normativity. What we should be is what are already (*i.e.,* what we are not and, moreover, should not be). What we are, then, is something more than what we *actually* are. In short, ontological normativity implies fundamental transcendence. We *should* be transcendent. And yet, the question arises, why *should* we be transcendent? So far the answer to the question has been differed to the ontological structure of being – we *should* be transcendent because we are *necessarily* this way. This is not, however, a clear answer to the question, and if it is, more needs to be said about the connection between (ontological) normativity and (ontological) necessity. In the next chapter, I will investigate the relation between the '*should*' and the '*must*' as it arises in the context of the problem of transcendence. I will enter into the topic through Heidegger's discussion of temporality as the meaning of being in *Being and Time,* a discussion that pulls together the various threads of our narrative thus far concerning meaning and transcendence, and opens a discussion of another key component yet to be examined, a component that brings the connection between meaning and transcendence into contact with the real issue of normativity – that is, freedom.

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[125] Pöggeler describes the appropriative event: "If one says that Heidegger thinks Being as appropriative event or, less clearly expressed, Being as time, as history, and if one then places this specification "Being as appropriative event" at the level of the metaphysical presupposition that Being is constant presencing, then one misunderstands everything. Heidegger does not replace the metaphysical determination of Being with another one. He asks instead how Being can be understood as Being at all, that is, he asks about what is concealed by the "as" in the usage "Being as Being," about the truth of Being itself." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 149)

4 *The Transcendence of Temporality*

Introduction:

In the present and final chapter, I will bring my path of reading to bear on Heidegger's notion of temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*], especially as the concept is discussed in *Being and Time*. Thus far, I have examined the connection between meaning and the basic concealment of being, a relation that shows us that we *are* what we are *not*, and, by extension, that we *must* (and *should*) be what we are (not). In this way, meaning, the negativity of being (as it pertains to possibility, a topic we specifically discussed in relation to the 'not', the nothing, and *Ereignis*), and normativity are not only interrelated, but more to the point, they are different ways of thinking about the same thing. Whether we are thinking about meaning as a self-surpassing process, concealment as the condition of possibility of revealing, the 'not' as that from which possibility is given, the nothing as the ground of being, or the fact that *what* we are *not* can correspond to what we *should* be, we are ultimately thinking about the problem of transcendence. The question is, however, do these aspects form a whole of some sort? How do the various parts of the problem of transcendence – and likewise, how do the various parts of being – relate such that the whole is not just a sum of its parts, but a unified event? Or again, how is the happening of life unified if it is always already happening? The Heidegger of *Being and Time* has one clear way into the question of existential holism: temporality. The goal of the present chapter, then, is to investigate and gain clarity on Heidegger's discussion of temporality in *Being and Time* as it relates to the problem of existential holism, which, I will argue, is another way of thinking about the problem of transcendence. That is to say, the question of how something beyond itself is nevertheless a unified whole (*i.e.*, the problem of existential holism) *is part of* the question of

how we should understand something that is beyond itself (*i.e.*, the problem of transcendence).
Thus, the final chapter will examine temporality in order to unify our investigation of the
problem of transcendence.

As it is the case with meaning, *Ereignis* and normativity, there are different ways to read
temporality. What kind of reading will free temporality such that the problem of existential
holism can be explored? Is there a reading that will disclose the transcendent process of
temporality? Put more simply, how should we understand temporality? With these questions in
mind, the chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I will present a general
overview of Heidegger's understanding of (average everyday) temporality. I will do this for two
reasons. Firstly, it is clear that temporality "happens" all the time – we are always already
temporalizing whether we know it or not. Thus, to establish a context from which I can discuss
different readings of temporality, it is important that I first understand how Heidegger describes
our average relation to time. Secondly, I will lay out central terms and ideas pertaining to the
discussion of temporality (as it is understood by the Heidegger of *Being and Time*) in order to
facilitate my discussion, in the following two sections, of different interpretations of temporality
and the problem of existential holism.

In the second section, I will continue to explore my path of reading by investigating the
pragmatist interpretation of temporality in the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. I will show that
within the pragmatist treatment of temporality, there are variances ranging from realist accounts
of temporality (Hubert Dreyfus and Taylor Carman) to idealist ones (William Blattner).
Nevertheless, true to form, such pragmatist readings have one common point – they understand
temporality as determined *by* humans and *not* as that which *determines* humans. In other words,

pragmatism understands temporality as a by-product of human activity. Ultimately, therefore, I will argue that the pragmatist account of temporality cannot take into consideration the fundamental passivity of being – in point of fact, temporality *grants* or *delivers* or *gives* or *donates* the process of existence and us with it.

In the third section, I will investigate another way to understand temporality; indeed, I will explore readings that open the possibility of showing the basic passivity and fundamental transcendence of temporality – a branch of criticism that I will call *transcendent readings* of Heidegger. I will argue that at the heart of the discussion on temporality is a way into the problem of existential holism, or, in other words, temporality shows us the unity of being. I will explore critics who argue that temporality is best understood on the basis of repetition, which is characterized by a process of becoming, and I will consider readings that argue temporality is the opening of meaning from which the ontological difference appears. Such interpretations have at least one point in common: temporality transcends being. In this way, being is not the ground of temporality (although to be certain, Dasein discloses temporality), but rather, temporality is the (self-transcending) ground of being.

From my transcendent reading of temporality, one new and further topic will be revealed – temporality is essential to freedom. Thus, in conclusion, I will consider two further points. Firstly, I will examine what the Heidegger of *Being and Time* means by freedom. I will discover that freedom is used in at least two ways: existentially and ontologically Secondly, I will explore how temporality releases the possibility of freedom and thereby opens the possibility of (a submission to) responsibility. Indeed, the reflection on temporality will bring us back to the question of normativity (*i.e.*, how *should* we be). To reprise once again my thesis in connection

with the present chapter, I will argue that since temporality is the meaning of being and, given that the problem of transcendence is the meaning of 'meaning', temporality (and the related problem of existential holism, freedom and responsibility) is the most comprehensive way to understand the problem of transcendence. Thus, the connection between meaning, possibility, and normativity must be sought through the transcendent process of temporality.

Section 1: What does Heidegger say about temporality? A general overview with an emphasis on transcendence

At the end of *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes, "The existential-ontological constitution of Dasein's totality is grounded in temporality. Hence the ecstatical projection of Being must be made possible by some primordial way in which ecstatical temporality temporalizes."[1] The meaning of Dasein taken as an existential whole is temporality – being *is* temporality. But what is the primordial way in which temporality temporalizes? What is the essential character of ecstatic temporalization? In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger writes, "transcendence makes possible the understanding of Being."[2] The process of ecstatic temporalization – or the *way* of being – is fundamentally characterized by transcendence. Put otherwise, temporality discloses itself *through* and *as* a process of transcendence. But what exactly is temporality? And how does it relate to transcendence? Although I have investigated the problem of transcendence as it appears at the level of ordinary existence, as it is intimated in the happening or event of being [*Ereignis*], as it shows itself in the call of conscience (a call heralding the possibility of authentic being), in the concealment of the non-determinable, self-secluding, undifferentiated 'not', and in the passive, unmasterable withdrawal of the ontological nothing, I have not yet explored the ground from which transcendence, and indeed all things, are disclosed. I have yet to investigate the transcendence of Dasein as it is grounded in the ecstatical horizon of temporality. In the present section, then, I will first re-interpret everyday meaning in terms of temporality; second, I will underscore the transcendent nature of temporality; third, I

[1] BT 488/SZ 437

[2] BP 302/GP 429

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will argue that since meaning is temporality and temporality is transcendent, meaning is primordially transcendence. The focus in the present section will be to reprise my previous discussion of meaning, this time explicitly thematizing the transcendent character of meaning so as to once again show (this time from the ground of temporality) that the question of the meaning of being may be understood as the problem of transcendence.

1.1: The temporal structure of understanding and language

Heidegger claims that understanding is grounded in temporality.[3] To understand this connection properly, there are two important issues to cover, namely the expectancy [expecting: *Gewärtigen*], and forgetfulness [forgetting: *Vergessen*] of understanding. Heidegger argues that understanding involves an expectation of being a certain way: "This inauthentic self-understanding by way of things has, indeed, the character of coming-toward-itself [*Auf-sich-zukommen*], of the future, but this is [an] *inauthentic future*; we characterize it as *expecting*. Only because Dasein is expectant of its can-be [potentiality-for-being: *Seinkönnen*] in the sense described, as coming from the things it attends to and cares for – only because of this expecting can it anticipate, *await* something from the things or wait for the way they run off."[4] In our commerce [or dealings: *Umgang*] with things, we wait expectantly for things to show us what we can and cannot be, and it is the fact that Dasein can wait for something to disclose its potentiality-for-being that reveals the expectant character of understanding. Indeed, the anticipating involvement Dasein has with things is grounded in expecting and a looking-forward-

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[3] BP 286/GP 405

[4] BP 289/GP 410-411

to.[5] For example, to return to our earlier example of the multi-tasking mother, as the woman prepares a bottle to feed her baby, she implicitly expects the bottle to be a realization of herself as a caring mother; in this way the object contributes to what she *can* be and what she *can* do with her immediate possibilities. Dasein in its commerce with and understanding of equipment is in part expectant and futurally oriented since it looks toward the future of what the equipment can provide.

The expectancy of everyday understanding also implies a forgetfulness of being; it "implies at the same time that we do not repeat the being we have been, we do not take ourselves over in our facticity. What we are – and what we have been is always contained in this – lies in some way behind us, *forgotten*."[6] In looking-forward-to and expecting things to determine its potentiality-for-being, Dasein conceals and forgets its having-been [*Gewesenheit*]. Heidegger specifies that this "forgetting is not the absence and failure to appear of a recollection so that in the place of a recollection there would be notion. It is, rather, a peculiar positively ecstatic mode of temporality."[7] The forgetting of being is a disengagement from what Dasein is and has been; it is a forgetfulness that forgets it has forgotten. Heidegger describes the ecstases of forgetfulness as having "the character of disengagement from one's most peculiar having-been-ness, and indeed in such a way that the disengaging-from closes off that from which it disengages. Forgetting, in closing off the past – and this is the peculiar feature of that ecstasis – closes itself off for itself."[8] Since forgetfulness forgets what Dasein has-been, since it disengages Dasein

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[5] BP 289/GP 410-411

[6] BP 290/GP 411

[7] BP 290/GP 411

[8] BP 290/GP 411

from its past, forgetfulness involves a having-been-ness and, thus, is also temporal in nature.

Thus, "[f]orgottenness is an elementary mode of temporality in which we *are* primarily and for the most part our own having-been."[9]

As the mother feeds her baby, she also speaks to an employee on the telephone and drinks a glass of Scotch – these tasks are related to each other given her present absorption. The various tasks she copes with are part of the woman's immediate web of relations, a network she seamlessly and unthinkingly appropriates. In point of fact, the fluidity of her appropriation is grounded in forgetfulness. On one level, the equipmental involvement is so efficient and engrossing that the woman forgets she has other average possibilities beyond those she is currently actualizing. For example, perhaps she forgot to call back her friend or she forgot the casserole on the stove and now dinner is burnt. On the other hand, a deeper level of forgetfulness subtends the ordinary type of forgetfulness. She forgets that she is not determining her present possibilities, but rather, living out the legacy of motherhood, womanhood, and managerial culture. She forgets that her present possibilities have been determined by a past granted to her and from which she is passively delivered; in effect, the woman forgets her having-been-ness, and thus, she forgets she has other possibilities than those granted from the stasis of ordinary understanding. In short, she forgets she *can* do anything at all. The forgetfulness of ordinary life is so forgetful that it does not show itself as forgotten – indeed, the mark of the undifferentation of average everyday life is that it forgets its forgetfulness.[10]

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[9] BP 290/GP 411

[10] As Heidegger writes in *History of the Concept of Time*: "Time is not something which is found outside somewhere as a framework for world events. Time is even less something which whirs away inside in consciousness. It is rather that which makes possible the being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-involved-in, that is,

Alongside her forgetfulness, the woman pre-reflectively looks forward to the future with expectancy, awaiting the equipmental totality to show her what she can do and be. Just as she does not determine her forgetful, undifferentiated everyday life, nor does she determined the way she presses into her average possibilities. The forgetfulness of her having-been-ness projects itself into a forgetfulness of her possibilities. In a sense, the woman does not only forget, but more to the point, in her ordinary, daily life (as she takes care of her baby, manages office problems on the phone, and drinks a Scotch), she is the forgetting. As Heidegger puts it: "[u]nderstanding oneself by way of feasible and directly encountered things involves a *self-forgetting*. The possibility of retaining something which one was just now expecting rests only on the basis of the original forgottenness that belongs to the factical Dasein… Accordingly, inauthentic understanding has the character of *forgetful-enpresenting-expectancy* [*vergessend-gegenwärtigenden Gewärtigens*]."[11] It is in this way that inauthentic understanding as expectant-forgetfulness is grounded in temporality.

As a final introductory note on understanding, it is important to underscore the intimacy between Dasein and its involvement with objects of its understanding. Dasein's understanding is not a relationship between object and subject. Understanding equipment means that Dasein is involved in or part of the usefulness of the equipment and is always already beyond itself in understanding equipment. Heidegger claims that we "understand ourselves by way of things, in the sense of the self-understanding of everyday Dasein. To understand ourselves from the things

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which makes possible the world of care. The time which we know everyday and which we take into account is, more accurately viewed, nothing but the Everyone to which Dasein in its everydayness has fallen. The being in being-with-one-another in the world, and that also means in discovering with one another the one world in which we are, is being in the Everyone and a particular kind of *temporality*." (HC 319-320/ PG 441-442)

[11] BP 290-291/GP 412

with which we are occupied means to project our own ability to be upon such features of the business of our everyday occupation as the feasible, urgent, indispensable, expedient. Dasein understands itself from the ability to be that is determined by the success and failure, the feasibility and unfeasibility, of its commerce with things. Dasein thus comes toward itself from out of the things."[12]

For example, as the mother feeds her baby with a bottle, she is involved with the equipmentality of motherhood such that her being is presently determined by and disclosed *as* the functionality of the equipment. She is herself part of the equipmental network of relations alongside the bottle and the telephone and glass of Scotch and even her baby – everything is understood inter-relationally. "When I am completely engrossed in dealing with something and make use of some equipment in this activity, I am not just directed toward the equipment as such, say, toward the tool. And I am just as little directed toward the work itself. Instead, in my occupation I move *in* the functionality relations as such. In understanding them I dwell with the equipmental contexture that is handy. I stand neither with the one nor with the other but move in the in-order-to."[13] As much as the mother works out the possibilities of the world, the world works out the mother's possibilities – that is to say, the network of relations delivers her as well as the objects she so handily uses into significance. In other words, the affectivity of the past grants her understanding of the future. The fact that understanding is essentially a self-surpassing granted from a self-concealing, passive forgetfulness shows us that Dasein is always already beyond itself, temporalizing its temporality in a forgetful understanding.

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[12] BP 289/GP 410 trans. mod.

[13] BP 293/GP 416

Language, understood as a specific form of interpretation, is also grounded in temporality. As Heidegger writes in *History of the Concept of Time*, "[e]very language, like Dasein itself, is *historical* in its very being."[14] A distinction must be made here between dead and living language. A language is dead when it "is no longer subject to changes in meaning."[15] Conversely, a language is alive when "contexts of meaning change with changes in the interpretation of historical Dasein and the time."[16] When we discuss language, we usually mean living languages. However, even dead languages are disclosive of being inasmuch as they disclose what Dasein was at one time and how it has changed such that it is *capable of* determining a language, which was once dynamic and now has fallen away to the more or less static margins of linguistics. The difference is that dead languages are not temporal in the same way as are living languages. A dead language is only related to the past, which therefore precludes the possibility of it evolving and self-transcending. A living language, on the other hand, is embedded in a certain cultural and social environment, which itself is historical and takes up the traditions of its past. Moreover, since language is the verbal actuality of a culture articulating its interpretation of its historicality, it opens up a future of possibility. Heidegger maintains that a "language has its genuine being only as long as new correlations of meaning and so – although not necessarily – new words and phrases accrue to it from understanding, that is, from care for the discoveredness of Dasein."[17] Interestingly, the creation of new words or the coining of new phrases does not necessarily determine living language. A language is living if it

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[14] HC 271/PG 373

[15] HC 271/PG 374

[16] HC 271/PG 374

[17] HC 271/PG 374-375

continues to be deployed anew. "Within any prevailing language in which Dasein itself is with

its history, every age and generation also has its own language and its specific possibility of

understanding."[18] Language is always already historical or handed-down from somewhere,

which indicates the interplay of having-been-ness and present-ness. In addition, since language is

a particular interpretation of being, it actualizes a definite possibility of Dasein and therefore is

futurally oriented. Thus, language is self-transcending as it evolves according to Dasein's

varying interpretation of its history, its socio-cultural context and its possibilities in general.[19]

1.2 Temporality as transcendent

The task now is to understand the transcendent characteristic of temporality so that we

may then return to the transcendent characteristic of meaning. Heidegger describes Dasein's

relation to its possibilities as thrown projection. Dasein is always already thrown into a world,

and as such, Dasein's present world is always already circumscribed and informed by the past.

This throwness is the background of presuppositions and historicality, which determine Dasein's

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[18] HC 271/PG 374-375

[19] As Jeffrey Powell explains in "Heidegger and the Communicative World" (Jeffrey Powell, "Heidegger and the Communicative World," *Research in Phenomenology* 1, vol. 40 (2010): 55-71), language is essential to the determination of Dasein's *da*, that is, to Dasein's thereness. In this way, language always already expresses understanding and attunement, projection and throwness. Powell discusses language as verbal language, as communication with others, and interprets the structure of communication as the basis for community. Therefore, understanding and attunement, projects and a thrown world are all fundamental features of community as much as they are existential conditions of Dasein. While I find his discussion interesting and helpful in considering the relationship between language and community, I believe we need to push the question of language deeper. For a deeper analysis of language, see Elizabeth Caldwell's "A Purely Spoken Monologue: The Poem and Heidegger's Way To Language" (Elizabeth Caldwell, "A Purely Spoken Monologue: The Poem and Heidegger's Way to Language," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 4, vol. 23 (2009): 267-284), in which she discusses Heidegger's claim that language is a monologue and that language is always speaking to itself. Thus, she explains, to understand the being of language, we must enter into its speaking. As Caldwell describes, Heidegger's analysis of language is very much an investigation into the unsaid in the tradition of metaphysics. He seeks the transcendental conditions of the experience of language. She argues that the radicalism of Heidegger's approach is not in his notion that language is an essential part of being, but in his turn away from the speaker and his (re)turn to the hearer. If language always speaks to itself, then we are primordially hearers of language. Language speaks through us and we encounter ourselves in the hearing.

present and future possibilities. As Dasein engages with the world, it is always already

actualizing possibilities and hence projecting a future. Therefore, the present is a temporal

boundary between past and future, a boundary, which is pre-reflectively informed by Dasein's

throwness and past, and which is always already opening a world of possibility by Dasein's

projection of a future. The meaning of being ultimately centers on Dasein's temporal relation to

itself;[20] this means the question of the meaning of being necessarily involves an analysis of the

relationship of being to time (*i.e.*, temporality).[21]

Temporality is an ecstatic or transcendent process of generation. Temporality is

primordially beyond itself insofar as the projected future, the throwness of the having-been and

the present constitute the ecstatic character of beyondness of temporality. Heidegger asserts that

the essence of temporality is not "an entity which first emerges from *itself*, its essence is a

process of temporalizing in the unity of the ecstasies. What is characteristic of the 'time' which

is accessible to the ordinary understanding, consists, among other things, precisely in the fact

that it is a pure sequence of "nows", without beginning and without end, in which the ecstatical

character of primordial temporality has been leveled off."[22] Dasein is not related to time as it is

to an object through which it exists. Rather, temporality is what being "is" – the possibility of

existing (in the manner of Dasein). Temporality involves a fluidity of past, present and future

such that these terms are no longer understood as a continuous series of moments through which

Dasein passes. They are always already at play in Dasein's possibility. Dasein is always already

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[20] BT 371-372/SZ 324-325

[21] BT 374/SZ 326-327

[22] BT 377/SZ 329

ahead, behind and alongside itself and it articulates this ecstatic temporal structure in existing. Temporality, then, is the ecstatic, self-displacing meaning of being.[23] Furthermore, the ecstatic nature of temporality can be characterized as the basic transcendence of being: "The *ecstatic character of time makes possible the Dasein's specific overstepping character, transcendence,* and thus also the world. [Furthermore], because of the ecstatic character of [future, past, and present], they each have a *horizon* which is prescribed by the mode of the removal, the carrying-away, the mode of the future, past and present, and *which belongs to the ecstasies itself.*"[24] Dasein's temporal horizon – a self-transcending horizon that pre-ontologically refers to possibilities *beyond* those actualized – is characterized by its reference to possibilities other than those actualized in the present. In other words, transcendence is Dasein's openness to other possibilities and the ontological character of being. Or to put it more simply: Dasein is open to what it, by virtue of its transcendence, recognizes as possible.

1.3: The transcendent temporality of the everyday

If understanding is grounded in temporality and temporality is transcendent, can we say that understanding is transcendent? Let us review the analysis so far. In my analysis of the understanding of the interrelated network of signification, I disclosed the world of everyday meaning. Everyday meaning is significant for everyday Dasein, and furthermore, everyday

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[23] A noticeable circle between temporality, meaning and transcendence is being described. Temporality is defined in terms of meaning and meaning is defined by transcendence; thus, temporality can be understood in terms of transcendence. Can the terms be defined independently? In the following investigation, I will attempt to give some definite understanding of temporality as the (self-transcending) process of pressing into the ontological difference, a process that frees meaning. However, it is important to note that temporality should not only be understood as Dasein specific (even though Dasein releases temporality and meaning), but rather as the condition of possibility of the ontological difference. In this way, temporality engenders meaning.

[24] BP 302/GP 428-429

Dasein is part of the network of world – this is being-in-the-world. I then discovered that the horizon of possibility of being-in-the-world is temporality, and temporality is transcendent. Therefore, by beginning at the level of everyday understanding, we are lead "to the connection between temporality and transcendence, since being-in-the-world is the phenomenon in which it becomes originally manifest how the Dasein by its very nature is "beyond itself." Starting from this transcendence, we comprehend the possibility of the understanding of being that is implicit in and illuminates our commerce with intraworldy beings. This then leads to the question of the interrelations of the understanding of being, transcendence, and temporality."[25]

To be sure, then, since understanding is necessarily ecstatic, in-the-world, and going beyond itself toward the equipment it understands, it is necessarily transcendent. As mentioned above, Dasein dwells with the equipment it understands, Dasein has commerce with the ready-to-hand world and therefore, linguistic meaning is also characterized by transcendence. In effect, if language is a specification of interpretation and interpretation is grounded in temporality, then language is also temporal and transcendent. As Heidegger says in connection with Dasein's linguistic transcendence: "In talking, Dasein *expresses* itself not because it has, in the first instance, been encapsulated as something 'internal' over against something outside, but because as being-the-world, it is already 'outside' when it understands."[26] Therefore, the two primary determinants of everyday meaning, namely, understanding and language, are disclosive of Dasein's transcendence.

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[25] BP 291-292/GP 413

[26] BT 205/SZ 162

From a different perspective, understanding and language are transcendent insofar as they actualize Dasein's transcendence specifically while retaining its openness to other possibilities. Although understanding and language specify Dasein's potentiality-for-being, because it is underpinned by temporality, Dasein is always already existentially open to the other possible potentialities-for-being. Notably, since openness to other possibilities is Heidegger's definition of transcendence, the question is: if Dasein's openness to possibility is the ontological definition of transcendence, yet the everyday actuality of transcendence necessitates a choice and consequent concealment of Dasein's openness to other possibilities, does the everyday actuality of transcendence negate transcendence on an ontological level?

This question may be answered if I consider the way inauthentic Dasein, although unaware of its possibilities, remains open to possibility. Although Dasein covers up its openness to possibility in linguistic articulations and other forms of everyday interpretations, Dasein remains ontologically underpinned by temporality. Therefore, the temporalization of Dasein's temporality is always already in play even when Dasein conceals its transcendence. As Heidegger describes:

> "This selfhood, founded on transcendence, the possible toward-itself and out-from-itself, is the presupposition for the way the Dasein factically has various possibilities of being its own and of losing itself. But it is also the presupposition for the Dasein's being-with others in the sense of the I-self with the thou-self. The Dasein does not exist at first in some mysterious way so as then to accomplish the step beyond itself to others

or to extant things. Existence, instead, always already means to step beyond or, better, having stepped beyond."[27]

Why exactly does existence always already mean having stepped beyond? To exist means always already to have-been thrown into a world. Existence means always already to have a past directing and determining the actuality of the present. Furthermore, existence means always already to have a potentiality-of-being, to have a projected future, which the present actuality will determine. Thus, because Dasein's existence is underpinned by the ecstases of temporality, existence always already means to step beyond, or more specifically, *to step behind and ahead of itself*. Consequently, even if present actuality covers up the play of possible interpretations, even if actualization conceals the very potentiality that is given in transcendence, all actualities, interpretations and choices are always already the actuality of stepping beyond. This is true not only because of the relationship between the past and the present, but more importantly, because of the way the present determines future possibilities, and therefore, regenerates the stepping-beyond of Dasein. Thus, in choosing one interpretation and fore-closing the play of other possible articulations, that is, in transcending and stepping-beyond itself, Dasein always already re-generates transcendence.

For example, the mother might say she is tired and that she wants to sleep, but despite this she will finish all the work that must be done, and in so doing she specifies one particular possibility – that she will deny herself sleep to fulfill her multiple responsibilities. In asserting and interpreting, she is transcendent, ecstatically open to the circumscribed, undifferentiated field of average possibilities. Even though the woman's assertion (of the possibility) that she will deny

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[27] BP 300/GP 425-426

herself sleep conceals the play of other possible interpretations (for example, she could go to bed and deny her responsibilities, or she could reconsider her possibilities *as such*), as Dasein, she remains ontologically open to a play of possibilities (pre-reflectively, this is the play of "should I or shouldn't I?"). In effect, these other possibilities remain within her field of existentiell possibility. The point is that even at the level of average possibilities, Dasein is transcendent. Indeed, it is because temporality is the most primordial horizon of possibility that inauthentic Dasein can be (forgetful, undifferentiated and yet) transcendent without negating its transcendence. When Dasein interprets the world or makes assertions about the world, that is, when Dasein discloses its transcendence, it is always already temporality and therefore always already surpassing – or transcending – the actuality of its transcendence. As the mother asserts her intentions towards her unending responsibilities, her throwness and projection continue to determine her in her very interpretation of them. Therefore, Dasein's transcendence is always already at play and is authentically or inauthentically and more or less explicitly disclosed through Dasein's involvements with the world.

To complete the present section, let us review once more the meaning of "meaning" as it should be understood through transcendence. "In our investigation," says Heidegger, "we have encountered this phenomenon in connection with the analysis of understanding and interpretation. According to that analysis, meaning is that wherein the understandability of something maintains itself – even that of something which does not come into view explicitly and thematically. "Meaning" signifies the "upon-which" of a primary projection in terms of which something can be conceived in its possibility as that which it is. Projecting discloses possibilities – that is to say, it discloses the sort of thing that makes possible. To lay bare the

"upon-which" of a projection, amounts to disclosing that which makes possible what has been projected."[28] The important point (which, incidentally, allows us to avoid reductive pragmatist readings of Heidegger) is that the very intelligibility of equipment depends on the projective nature of Dasein. Inquiring into the meaning of things is to ask what makes possible things as they are shown. How is functionality itself possible? The answer is given through Dasein's everyday understanding. In turn, the meaning of Dasein's everyday understanding, or the source of everyday understanding, is the existential condition of understanding and ultimately the existential structural totality of Dasein taken as a whole, namely, care. How is the care structure possible? What is the meaning of care? The meaning of care, or the horizon of possibility of the care structure, is temporality.

Notice the crucial characteristic of meaning: it discloses the specific way in which intelligibility requires a reference beyond the "thing" itself (be it a piece of equipment or an existentiale). If the meaning of something is tantamount to "that which makes possible" that thing, then meaning is always already a relational term, though not relational in a causal or material sense. *Rather, meaning is a relational or transcendent term insofar as it seeks to disclose the interplay between things in their primordial unity.* Meaning inquires into the transcendent nature of things, where this transcendence stems not from presence-at-hand (physicality), but more primordially, from Dasein's own existential mode of transcendence. According to Heidegger's terminology, inquiring into meaning is to inquire into the transcendence of being and world; as Heidegger writes, the "question about the essence of

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[28] BT 370-371/SZ 324

reasons becomes the *problem of transcendence*."[29] Just as the horizon of possibility of the

meaning of Dasein is temporality, the ontological foundation or condition of possibility of

meaning as transcendence is the originary, transcendent structure of temporality.

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[29] ER 29/WG 29

Section 2: What pragmatists say about temporality (prioritizing practice)

As I continue to shape my reading of Heidegger, the complex problem of interpretation continues to unfold. Within the investigation of temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*], I once again encounter vastly diverging views. So debated is the topic that even within the major divisions of Heidegger scholarship such as pragmatism, there is vast disagreement. Although pragmatist critics generally agree that everyday meaning in the Heidegger of *Being and Time* has something to do with understanding and what we *can* do, on the topic of temporality, the pragmatist readings vary from idealism (*e.g.*, Blattner) to realism (*e.g.*, Dreyfus and Carman). Nevertheless, despite their differences, I will show that a hidden fact can be traced throughout the various pragmatist views: when investigated phenomenologically, even the pragmatist understanding of temporality reveals the fundamental ground of transcendence.

Although within Heideggerian scholarship his view of the topic is not commonly held,[30] Hubert Dreyfus's pragmatist (or as William Blattner describes it, scientific realist)[31] interpretation of temporality is an example of the baseline from which all other interpretations of temporality are possible. That is to say, other than completely dismissing Heidegger's notion of temporality as impenetrable and too abstract to be meaningful, the slightest interpretation one can have of the term is, as Dreyfus suggests, that temporality is *a way* to understand the meaning of being (and not as *the* meaning of being as Heidegger frequently writes). The difference

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[30] William Blattner calls it a "minority position". See: William D. Blattner, *Temporal Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 250.

[31] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 250.

between being '*a* way' and '*the* way' is an important one – it is the difference between *applying* temporality to understand life and understanding life *as* temporality. In Dreyfus's words, temporality makes "sense of Dasein's way of making sense."[32] From this rather scientific or ontic view, temporality is a way to describe humans as they (always already) understand their projects and practices within a network of relations, rather than the ground upon which this web of signification arises. In other words, temporality is a way to interpret the pervasiveness of practical relations. Like a scientist looking through a microscope, Dreyfus's scientific-realist model posits temporality as an interpretative framework that makes sense of existence and its sense-making – it allows us look more closely at the practical activity of life. Importantly, however, the scientific-realist model *cannot* explain why we make sense of things *in the way* that we make sense of them, and moreover, *why* there is sense-making at all. Rather, Dreyfus assumes that skills and practices are self-explanatory and he unmistakably sidesteps the question.[33]

In sharp distinction from Dreyfus's scientific-realist model, William Blattner argues that temporality is not just a way to understand being, but a basic character of the unity of being. In what seems a direct response to Dreyfus's scientific model, Blattner contends that Heidegger's description of the temporal structure of being is not "just [him] dropping another layer of jargon over the structure of human existence. Rather, he believes that he is deepening his analysis by

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[32] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 38.

[33] As Dreyfus writes: "Heidegger has a more radical reason for saying that we cannot get clear about the "beliefs" about being we seem to be taking for granted. There are not beliefs to get clear about; there are only skills and practices. These practices do not arise from beliefs, rules, or principles, and so there is nothing to make explicit or spell out. We can only give an interpretation of the interpretation already in the practices." (Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*, 22) Although he is correct in his description of Heidegger's view of beliefs, Dreyfus's claim that there is nothing beyond interpretation and practice is too ontic a perspective on the ground of being.

revealing the distinctive *unity* of human existence."[34] Blattner's analysis of temporality begins

with the method from which temporality is revealed, namely, phenomenology. As Blattner

argues, Heidegger's phenomenology re-inscribes a difference between things as they appear to

consciousness and things *as they are* prior to consciousness (a version of metaphysical dualism

or a re-inscription of intentionality). If phenomenology is the way to reveal ontology, then isn't

phenomenology just another way to *think* being – is it not itself an idea through which things

appear?[35]

     Blattner issues an interesting challenge – if things show themselves to humans insofar as

they make sense, and things make sense inasmuch as they are useful (given our practically

oriented understanding), then only useful things (*i.e.*, the things we understand) that make sense

to humans show up in the meaningful world. Therefore, only useful, significant things *can* be

described. Put simply, we can only describe what we understand. The outcome, according to

Blattner, is that "phenomenology is the study of appearances,"[36] and this implies a type of

idealism (*i.e.,* the idea that humans determine what is meaningful).[37] From this view, the method

of phenomenology entails idealism – meaning would not appear if humans did not exist. By

extension, Blattner argues that Heidegger can be described as a temporal idealist, "that is, one

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[34] William Blattner, "*Temporality*," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall, 312 (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

[35] As Blattner writes, "does not the identification of phenomenology as the method of ontology turn ontology into a science of appearances, rather than being? Phenomenology, as the description of a phenomenon, that is, a way in which things *show themselves* to us, cannot possibly be the method of ontology, unless one dogmatically assumes some form of idealism, one might object." (Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 9-10).

[36] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 10.

[37] As Blattner writes, "If phenomena are appearances, then phenomenology is the science of the way things appear to us, *rather than* the way they are. Therefore, to characterize phenomena as appearances is to impose a theory of appearance and reality on phenomena already." (Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 11)

who believes that time would not obtain, if Dasein did not exist,"[38] or again even more clearly, "[by] *temporal idealism* I mean the thesis that time depends on Dasein."[39]

In one sense, Blattner correctly describes the inextricable relation between being and time, at least in his rebuttal to the (Dreyfusian) empirical realist or scientific-realist model of temporality. He contends that empirical realism (*i.e.*, the view that there is a thing-in-itself beyond human experience, or more to the point, that time exists independently from human practice) is actually contingent on Blattner's own temporal-idealism model. There can be no question concerning empirical realism, the thing-in-itself, or thought experiments about a world before or after the existence of humans. The scope of what can be thought and discussed depends on humans and their empirical standpoint, a standpoint that is itself contingent on temporality. In other words, the question of a world existing beyond humans implies that time exists beyond humans (after all, a world that exists beyond humans must exist *before* or *after* humans, or at least *beyond* the presence of humans). Blattner's position is clear on this point: time does not exist beyond humans, and thus, empirical realism cannot be correct.[40]

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[38] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 12.

[39] Blattner, "Temporality," 317.

[40] Blattner writes: "From within the empirical standpoint we can think Dasein away and ask what is or would be the case in its absence. We ask what happened *before* humans came to be, what is likely to happen *after* they pass away, and what would have happened, if they had *never* been. These are all questions about past, future, and possible *times*. Thus, they indicate that we are asking our questions from the empirical standpoint. We are thinking Dasein away, but not time. But (from the phenomenological standpoint) time does depend on Dasein, and so if we leave the empirical standpoint behind, move to the transcendental standpoint, and think time itself away, we find that the criteria that would determine answers to our questions have been thought away as well. From this transcendental standpoint, our questions cannot be answered, not because we cannot figure out how to answer them, but rather because the framework that should determine an answer is now gone. There is no conflict between empirical realism and transcendental, temporal idealism." (Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 249)

Indeed, Blattner clearly sets himself apart from Dreyfus when he asserts that "time belongs to Dasein's being", and that time "is not an entity, but rather an ontological structure."[41] Blattner understands temporality as a condition from which interpretation is possible,[42] and not, as Dreyfus suggests, as another way to interpret human interpretation.[43] Remark, however, that temporal-idealism cannot itself explain why humans determine time *at all* (presuming, of course, that they *do* determine time). If time is a human expression, then why do humans express themselves in *this* way? If humans *just are* temporal, why are humans temporal in *this* specific way? Or deeper still, why is there originary temporality *at all*?[44] In point of fact, the limits of the

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[41] Blattner, "Temporality," 318.

[42] He writes, "if originary temporality did not obtain, world-time and natural time would not obtain either." (Blattner, "Temporality," 318)

[43] Blattner describes the different levels of temporality as a way of clarifying the inextricable entanglement between humans and time, and more importantly the way time is *contingent* on human activity. For example, the way we understand things most of the time is structured by world-time (*i.e.*, time related to human interests such as time to go to work, time to eat, time to rest, time to go out, time to make a change, etc.), which is the condition of possibility of ordinary time (*i.e.*, time normally thought as independent from humans such as clock time). In other words, ordinary time, that is, "the pure flow of clock-time, meaningless, empty and potentially precise" (Blattner, "Temporality," 317), is grounded in world-time. Moreover, both world-time and ordinary time are grounded in originary temporality, *i.e.*, on the unity of the care structure of Dasein as Dasein presses into future possibilities delivered from the affectivity of its past. As Blattner writes: "Put in comparatively jargon-free terms, Heidegger's point is that insofar as we are immersed in a now in which we deal with the paraphernalia of our world, we are aimed ahead into the completion of our tasks and rely upon the wherewithal of our environment. The world-time now is inherently spanned or stretched from a before to an after. It is significant, datable, spanned, public, and sequential or successive. This world-time now-structure is, however, embedded in originary temporality as merely one of the latter's ecstasies. We wield equipment in order to tackle tasks only because we understand ourselves the way we do: I apply contact cement to my disintegrating formica countertop, because I understand myself as a homeowner." (Blattner, "Temporality," 320-321). As Blattner argues, then, regardless of the level of time discussed, in all cases, human activity (or human understanding) directs our understanding of time. In short, all senses of time are determined by humans. John Haugeland makes a similar argument in his book *Dasein Disclosed* (John Haugeland, *Dasein Disclosed*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 221-240).

[44] Upon closer look at his understanding of historicality, the parameters of Blattner's temporal-idealist model are clearly apparent. Blattner understands historicality as a temporal possibility, or in other words, that originary temporality makes historicality possible. Blattner writes: "the concept of historicality aims to capture the distinctive way in which Dasein stands in time, distinctive in virtue of its originary temporality. In a nutshell, Dasein is historical, in that it inherits its possibilities form its forebears and inherits them as already mattering. Dasein's possibilities are handed down to it by way of tradition. Heidegger's discussion of historicality may be illuminating for its own sake, but it does not spell out originary temporality itself." (Blattner, "Temporality," 322-323) Put otherwise, from temporality (*i.e.*, the basic condition of experience), a history of experience is possible. Therefore,

temporal-idealism model of temporality are plainly revealed as Blattner attempts to treat a

passage from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* in which he finds an irreconcilable

difference between what Heidegger *actually* writes and the *premise* of the temporal-idealism

model.[45] As a resolution to the problem, Blattner resorts to the claim that the (small) excerpt

from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* conflicts with the (large) overarching argument

from *Being and Time* (which Blattner interprets as supporting evidence for his temporal-idealism

model), and therefore, the excerpt from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* is ruled

invalid.[46]

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temporality is a basic feature of the structure (or an *idea*) of Dasein, and historicality is an extension of the basic feature (or idea).

[45] Blattner finds Heidegger's claim that occurrent entities would exist without Dasein confusing, not only in the way it does not adhere to the temporal-idealist model, but also given other, numerous passages that he believes suggest that occurrent entities, like everything else, is time and Dasein dependent. The excerpt from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* is worth quoting to allow the reader to follow Blattner's argument and my counter-argument in the following pages. The excerpt is: "At any rate, beings (extant things) could never get encountered had they not the opportunity to enter a world. We are speaking therefore of the possible and occasional entrance of beings into world. When and how is this possibility realized? Entry into world is not a process of extant things, in the sense that beings undergo a change thereby and through this change break into the world. The extant's entry into world is "something" that happens to it. World-entry has the characteristic of happening, of history [Geschichte]. World-entry happens when transcendence happens, i.e., when historical Dasein exists. Only then is the being-in-the-world of Dasein existent. And only when the latter is existent, have existant things too already entered world, i.e., become intrawordly. And only Dasein, qua existing, provides the opportunity for world-entry. Intrawordliness is accordingly not an extant property of extant things in themselves. Extant things are beings as the kind of things they are, even if they do not become intrawordly, even if world-entry does not happen to them and there is no occasion for it at all. Intraworldliness does not belong to the essence of extant things as such, but it is only the transcendental condition, in the primordial sense, for the possibility of extant things being able to emerge as they are. And that means it is the condition for existing Dasein's experience and comprehension of things as they are. World-entry and its occurrence is the presupposition *not* for extant things to become first extant and enter into that which manifests itself to us as its extantness and which we understand as such. Rather, world-entry and its occurrence is solely the presupposition for extant things announcing themselves in their not requiring world-entry regarding their own being." (MFL 194-195/ML 250-251)

[46] Blattner writes: "[The excerpt from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*] appears to say that occurrent entities would be occurrent, even if Dasein did not exist. And this seems in turn to challenge my reading of Heidegger, since according to it not only would occurrentness not "be," if Dasein were not, but also occurrent things would neither be nor not be, if Dasein were not. The difficulty with this passage from *Metaphysical Foundations*, however, is that it conflicts with the literal texts of *Being and Time*, p. 212, not just with my interpretation. However one reads it, p. 212 of *Being and Time* literally states that independence (occurrentness) neither is nor is not, when Dasein does not exist, and also that occurrent entities then neither are nor are not." (Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 250)

However, Blattner's model misses the point: time is not determined by Dasein, but rather Dasein appears from time (a point that cannot be captured by the temporal-idealism model since idealism cannot think about ideas beyond the consciousness that thinks ideas). To be certain, Dasein is the site from which temporality can be thought, but the disclosure of temporality (through Dasein) is granted from a deeper level of being, one in which temporality both grants the appearance of life and withdraws from appearance. As my investigation has revealed, historicality can be understood as an originary happening or event of being [*Ereignis*] from which all things, including Dasein and temporality, are thought. From this view, temporality is *not* determined by Dasein, it is *not* an idea of Dasein or merely part of its existential structure. Temporality is an originary way to think Dasein, a basic condition of being *as such*. Thus, Blattner's temporal-idealism model conceals the possibility that temporality is itself the ground from which Dasein arises, and by extension, it cannot consider the possibility that temporality is (not only) *not* determined by Dasein, but it is itself delivered from a deeper ontological condition, the history or thrownness of temporality, *i.e.*, historicality. As the later Heidegger contends, temporality is *itself* granted from the happening of history.[47]

Taking the later Heidegger into consideration (or perhaps more simply, if I do not read Heidegger as a pragmatist), Blattner's confusion over Heidegger's ostensibly conflicting remarks between the excerpts from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* and *Being and Time* can be clarified. It is *not* so much that "occurrent entities would be occurrent, even if Dasein did not

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[47] As the later Heidegger writes: "The question of being is the question of the truth of being. When grasped and worked out historically, it becomes the *basic question*, versus the previous question of philosophy, the question of beings (the guiding question)." (CP 8/BZP 6-7)

exist,"[48] but that occurrentness *only appears alongside* world-entry. Heidegger is not describing

a chronology of events here; more to the ontological point, Heidegger is describing the

equiprimordiality of world and Dasein – that is, there is no independent object or being,

everything is related and part of the network of relations. The confusion over Heidegger's claim

that the happening of world-entry is the presupposition "merely for occurrent entities announcing

themselves precisely in their not needing world-entry with respect to their own being"[49] arises

because Blattner mistakenly believes that Heidegger's claim that "the occurrent is precisely what

does not depend upon Dasein or its practices"[50] somehow contradicts the majority of

Heidegger's arguments in *Being and Time*.[51]

As I will show, however, Heidegger's claim is not so controversial or self-contradictory,

especially from the standpoint of a non-pragmatist, transcendent reading of Heidegger's corpus.

Occurrent entities *do not* depend upon Dasein or its practices – this much *is* true and in keeping

with the excerpt from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* and the excerpt from *Being and

Time*, depending on how one reads the latter passage. In point of fact, the idea that *anything at

all* is determined or dependent on Dasein and its practices (*i.e.*, the basic thesis of the temporal-

idealism model) is overly deterministic and reductive. Rather, as the excerpt from *The

Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* clearly states, occurrent entities are not world dependent, but

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[48] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 250.

[49] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 250. The original quote from *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (trans. Michael Heim) is: "Rather, world-entry and its occurrence is solely the presupposition for extant things announcing themselves in their not requiring world-entry regarding their own being." (MF 195/ML 251)

[50] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 251.

[51] Indeed, especially those arguments in the excerpt from BT 255/SZ 212 – an excerpt reprised by Taylor Carman and one I will examine as well.

discovered alongside the discovery of the world, and the self-discovering of Dasein. The passage

in question does *not* imply that "world-entry is the showing up of occurrent entities within the

world" inasmuch as "something can "enter into world" only when Dasein is,"[52] but rather that

the showing of occurrent entities happens *at the same time* as the discovering of world-entry, that

is, alongside the discovering of Dasein and world. In other words, present-at-hand (or occurrent

entities) *as much a*s ready-to-hand equipment are possibilities of world-discovery – neither mode

is dependent or independent from Dasein. The question of dependence and independence *only*

appears as worldly possibilities, possibilities which are themselves deployed by the process of

existence. In this way it is possible to understand Heidegger's claim that without Dasein,

"'independence' 'is' not either, nor 'is' the 'in-itself'" and furthermore, that "[in] such a case

even entities within-the-world can neither be discovered nor lie hidden."[53] Moreover, when

Heidegger writes that "Being (not entities) is dependent upon the understanding of Being,"[54] he

does not mean that the relation between understanding and being is only (or mostly) instrumental

and deterministic. Rather, being is dependent on understanding insofar as the possibilities of

being are opened or disclosed by human appropriation. In short, Heidegger means being *is* the

opening.[55]

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[52] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 250.

[53] BT 255/SZ 212

[54] BT 255/SZ 212

[55] Taking this into consideration, we can understand the following quote *not* to describe deterministic conditions, but rather, equiprimordial relations or the process of disclosure. Heidegger writes, "only if the understanding of Being *is*, do entities as entities become accessible; only if entities are of Dasein's kind of Being is the understanding of Being possible as an entity." (BT 255-256/SZ 212)

Returning to Blattner's initial claim on method, then, phenomenology is *not* just a

method of describing how (intelligible) things appear, as Blattner construes it, but more

correctly, phenomenology is a method that allows things to appear *as they are* insofar as it

captures the play between the appearance of being and the underlying refusal of being from

which phenomena appear in the first place. Briefly put, phenomenological descriptions of

presence intimate and are deployed from absence.[56] Or from a different perspective, the

meaningful world, and Dasein are made possible from the self-transcending event of history.

From the appearance of intelligibility, something *more* reveals itself for phenomenological

investigation – that which transcends intelligibility. To thus state my position clearly: Heidegger

cannot be an idealist. Indeed, the happening of world-entry, *i.e.,* temporality *as such*, grants life

and not the opposite.[57] Another way to put it is to say that idealism is itself an idea granted from

temporality.

Lee Braver's description of (our pre-ontological understanding of) temporality as "the

way a fish lives in water"[58] is in some way similar to Blattner's temporal-idealism model. Braver

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[56] As Heidegger contends in *Introductions to Metaphysics*: "Being means appearing. Appearing does not mean something derivative, which from time to time meets up with Being. Being essentially unfolds *as* appearing… Being essentially unfolds as *phusis*. The emerging sway is an appearing. As such, it makes manifest. This already implies that Being, appearing, is a letting-step-forth from concealment. Insofar as a being as such *is*, it places itself into and stands in *unconcealment, aletheia*." (IM 107)

[57] For another argument against the thesis that Heidegger is an idealist, see Mathew Abbott's "The Poetic Experience of the World" (Mathew Abbott, "The Poetic Experience of the World," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 4, vol. 18 (2010): 493-516). Abbot uses Heidegger's phenomenology of poetry to undercut arguments that Heidegger is a linguistic idealist. Abbott argues that poetic language resists both pragmatist and idealistic readings of Heidegger's discussion of world-disclosure. Furthermore, Abbott makes the case that break down, the moment within which the equipmentality of an object reveals itself, insists upon us the reality of a concrete world. In a manner of speaking, if the interrelated significance of equipment is not enough to persuade us that Heidegger is not a linguistic idealist, then the disruption that poetic language effects on average everyday understanding should be enough to prove that the (possibly idealist) network of significance is not all there is to Heidegger's world. As Abbott argues, breakdown insinuates there is more, and art brings forth even more.

[58] Lee Braver, *Heidegger* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 101.

argues that temporality "determines everything about us, including how we experience reality."[59]

Since reality can only be experienced as temporal, "reality is temporal."[60] Braver concludes that

"[we] don't have the ability to see what the world is like independently of the ways we

experience it, so any world we can talk about is the way the world is for us."[61] Like fish that

cannot live outside of water, Braver contends that humans cannot live outside of time. Although

Braver does not call himself a temporal idealist, the implications of his position are similar to

those of Blattner's temporal-idealist model: time is a basic feature of human experience beyond

which thought and experience are impossible. Although Braver's ideas on the topic are less

developed than Blattner's and Braver certainly does not work through the implications of his

position as thoroughly as Blattner does (albeit, Braver likely has different goals than Blattner),

Braver's view of temporality in some sense resembles the temporal-idealism model inasmuch as

he understands temporality as a condition of experience.

One way Braver *does* diverge from Blattner is that he takes into account the

pervasiveness of the nullity in relation to truth, that is, the "lacks and gaps and cracks which is

what lets the light into the clearing."[62] He describes the nullity of time as stretching Dasein out

and opening it up. He writes "[it] is being stretched out that opens us up; it is because we are

never simply where we are that we can be anywhere – that we can be-there (Da-sein)."[63] Braver

acknowledges an important aspect of temporality, one missed by Blattner's temporal idealism,

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[59] Braver, *Heidegger*, 103.

[60] Ibid., 103.

[61] Ibid., 103.

[62] Ibid., 102.

[63] Ibid.,102.

namely, that Dasein does not *determine* temporality, but rather, the fundamental transcendence

of temporality – the nullity, the gaps, the lack, the concealment, the passivity – *delivers* Dasein

into its discovering. In this way, Braver's rather broad reading of temporality suggests a new

path of discussion, one that considers the transcendence of temporality – a path I will thematize

in the next section. Yet another difference between Braver and the temporal-idealist model is his

suggestion that there *could* be a world independent of the ways we experience it – the water that

makes the fish-world possible, so to speak. Whatever the independent world *is*, however, is

beyond the limits of our finite time – in this way Braver intimates a realist perspective similar to

the one apparent in Taylor Carman's ontic-realism.

Once again attempting to walk the line between analytic and continental readings, Taylor

Carman both agrees and disagrees with the idea that without humans, time does not exist.[64]

Indeed, Carman finds error in (part of) Blattner's argument for temporal idealism.[65] To support

his argument, Carman calls attention to a citation in Blattner's book, one taken from Heidegger's

Introduction to Metaphysics, and in which Blattner finds undeniable proof that Heidegger is a

temporal idealist.[66] On the contrary, Carman argues that Blattner misreads (or at least

incompletely reads) the passage. Blattner understands the claim that "we cannot say there was a

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[64] See: Taylor Carman, "Heidegger's Temporal Idealism book review," *The Journal of Philosophy* 5, vol. 97 (2000): 308-312. The book review was republished as part of Carman's book, *Heidegger's Analytic*.

[65] Carman also takes issue with Blattner's claim that Heidegger's explanation of how ordinary, sequential, clock-time is derived from world-time is unconvincing (for Blattner's argument see: Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 19). To be clear, Carman does not take issue with Blattner's claim that the effort is unconvincing, but with the idea that the explanation *is* Heidegger's goal. This criticism, however, is not directly related to the main point of my argument.

[66] See: Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 217; Carman, "Heidegger's Temporal Idealism book review," 311; Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 173; Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 88-89. As Blattner writes: "Heidegger could not put the stronger thesis – that all time depends on Dasein – more clearly than this." (Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 217)

time when there were no human beings"[67] to indicate that "all time depends on Dasein"[68] while Carman argues there is another way to interpret the claim. As Carman writes, "Heidegger seems to be suggesting that time *in one sense* depends on human beings and *in another sense* does not."[69] That is to say, although only Dasein can discover things, and the condition of possibility of discovering things (including Dasein) is time (or more precisely, the temporal unity of past, present and future), it is *possible* there *was* time or things *before* humans (a clearly non-idealist or realist perspective). To be certain, the horizon of temporality enables the discovery of the world *as such*, but as Carman suggests, perhaps there is *more* to the story than told by the temporal-idealism model.

Here, Carman's own view is shown – Carman contends that Heidegger is an ontic realist. Realism should not be understood in the broad sense implying an omnipotent God, or an exhaustive view from nowhere.[70] Rather, a more "austere ontic realism" should be adopted, argues Carman, a view that holds "that occurrent entities exist and have a determinate structure in the absence of any and all views."[71] Carman cites proof from *Being and Time* to support his position, and finds traction for his argument in Heidegger's description of the co-dependence between Dasein and the *intelligibility* of entities – as Carman asserts, the co-dependence

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[67] IM 88

[68] Blattner, *Temporal Idealism*, 217.

[69] Carman, "Heidegger's Temporal Idealism book review," 311; Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 173.

[70] Carman writes: "If realism is understood so as to entail commitment to some such absolute and authoritative perspective, a God's-Eye point of view, a view from nowhere, then I believe Heidegger is no more a realist than Kant. But then, no one ought to be a realist in that strong sense, if not because, as Nietzsche famously declared, God is dead, then at least because the expression 'view from nowhere' is a contradiction in terms." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 167)

[71] Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 167.

nevertheless suggests that entities *can* exist *beyond* their intelligibility, *i.e.*, beyond Dasein.[72]

Following the thread of his demonstration-model of meaning, Carman argues that given the pervasiveness of interpretation (*i.e.,* that meaning is determined by what is demonstrably understandable), what is *not* interpretable (or *not* demonstrably understandable) is *not* dependent on humans, and by extension *can* exist in a non-dependent condition.

To put the ontic-realism model in stronger terms, Carman contends that occurrent entities exist beyond human determination.[73] This does *not* mean, however, that the way things really are in themselves, independent from human interpretation, is *not* the way they appear to human interpretation. In other words, maybe the way we understand things *is* the way things really are.[74] I take it that Carman's point is twofold: on the one hand, there is no reason to suppose that things do not exist beyond human conception, and on the other hand, there is no reason to suppose that things independent from humans are not the way humans conceive of them.[75] Viewed from the

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[72] Carman quotes the following excerpt from *Being and Time*: "Of course only as long as Dasein *is* (that is, only as long as an understanding of Being is ontically possible), 'is there' Being. When Dasein does not exist, 'independence' 'is' not either, nor 'is' the 'in-itself'. In such a case this sort of thing can be neither understood nor not understood. In such a case even entities within-the-world can neither be discovered nor lie hidden. *In such a case* it cannot be said that entities are, nor can it be said that they are not. But *now*, as long as there is an understanding of Being and therefore an understanding of presence-at-hand, it can indeed be said that *in this case* entities will still continue to be." (BT 255/SZ 212) For Carman's comment on the issue of entities existing beyond their intelligibility see footnote xlvii: "Since Heidegger understands being as the conditions of the intelligibility of entities as entities, one could also say that occurrent entities exist independently of Dasein and Dasein's understanding of being, though their intelligibility as entities as does not." (Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 168)

[73] Carman writes: "The fact that our mundane practices condition our interpretations of entities, including our interpretations of occurrent entities as occurrent, in no way implies that those entities are not after all occurrent independently of our practices and interpretations." (Ibid., 178)

[74] It is possible that "facts describable by us, in virtue of our practices and interpretations, really do obtain in the world independently of the practical and hermeneutic resources by means of which we come to know them. But the internal dependence of knowledge on practice and interpretation gives us no reason to deny that our knowledge uncovers things as they are in themselves." (Ibid., 178)

[75] Carman writes: "It makes no sense to insist that meaningful claims concerning the ontological status of occurrent entities must somehow lack truth value in abstraction from Dasein's understanding of being. For such an assertion is itself either false or trivial: false if it means that we cannot coherently say, as Heidegger himself says, that occurrent

ontic-realist model, then, Heidegger's project is to describe the hermeneutic conditions from which meaning appears – a goal that extends to temporality as well.[76]

It is true that Heidegger offers an account of conditions of intelligibility; however, the phenomenological method shows us that the deeper ground of intelligibility is not actually a condition at all.[77] Rather, as the later Heidegger writes, it is neither a condition nor is it intelligible – it is a withdrawal from intelligibility or a refusal of the conditions of being.[78] Carman's pragmatism limits his view here – intelligibility and interpretation bound his investigation to the conditions of sense-making.[79] In point of fact, I disagree with two parts of Carman's argument – one interpretative, the other substantive. In the first case, Carman exaggerates somewhat when he writes that since "Heidegger understands being as the conditions of the intelligibility of entities as entities, one could also say that occurrent entities exist independently of Dasein and Dasein's understanding of being."[80] Carman supports his claim

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entities exist independently of Dasein and Dasein's understanding of being; trivial if it just means that if we deprive ourselves of all possible hermeneutic resources, we will literally find ourselves unable to say anything." (Ibid., 171)

[76] As Carman writes, Heidegger advances "accounts of the hermeneutic conditions of our ordinary *conceptions* of objectivity and temporality" and describes "the hermeneutic salience in virtue of which we come to understand truth prephilosophically *as* a kind of agreement between thoughts and things, between words and the world."[76] (Ibid., 263)

[77] As Heidegger writes in "What in Metaphysics?": "Assuming that the question of Being as such is the encompassing question of metaphysics, then the question of the nothing proves to be such that it embraces the whole of metaphysics. But the question of the nothing pervades the whole of metaphysics since at the same time it forces us to face the problem of the origin of negation." (WM 108)

[78] As Heidegger writes: "The abandonment of beyng happens to beings and indeed to beings as a whole and thereby also to that being which, as human, stands in the midst of beings and, in so doing, forgets their beyng. Through a disclosure of the abandonment by being, the resonating of beyng seeks to bring back beyng in its *full essential occurrence* as the event. That bringing back will happen only if, through the grounding of Da-sein, beings are placed back into beyng as opened up in the leap." (CP 92/BZP 115-117) Or, more explicitly, Heidegger writes: "The refusal is the highest nobility of bestowal and is the basic trait of the self-concealment *whose* manfiestness constitutes the originary essence of the truth of beyng." (CP 321/BZP 405-406)

[79] Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 20-21.

[80] Ibid., 168.

with a citation from Heidegger's 1931 lecture on Aristotle's Metaphysics,[81] and emphasizes the

point that, although things are senseless without man, this "*is not to say that the things*

themselves are dependent on man."[82] Here, Carman stretches the claim too far; after all, to *not* be

dependent on man is quite different from being *independent* from man. Conceivably, a young

adult could *not* be dependent on her parents (at least not as she was as a child or baby – *i.e.,*

dependent for food, money, support, guidance), and yet *not* be independent from her parents (*i.e.,*

her life and self-understanding might be bound to her relation to her parents). Heidegger does *not*

claim that beyond interpretation there are things (occurrent, natural, in themselves or otherwise).

Rather, Heidegger makes the less metaphysical (and more ontological) claim that beyond

interpretation there is something that is *not* dependent on humans, something that refuses

interpretation and withdraws from being. Not only is the refusal of being *not dependent* on man,

but it also gives or donates the hermeneutic conditions of life.

This leads me to the second way in which Carman is wrong – substantively speaking,

Carman has no reason to make the leap from the pervasiveness of interpretation to ontic realism.

In fact, why should the pervasiveness of interpretation necessarily imply either Blattner's

idealism or Carman's realism? Why must it be the case that the pervasiveness of interpretation

necessarily implies either a) that human interpretation is all there is, or b) that our interpretation

is an interpretation *of* a real world (which may or may not be accurately captured by our

interpretations – though as Carman suggests, both possibilities are equally valid)? Both options

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[81] Carman quotes Heidegger's lecture: "The independence of occurrent things from us human beings is not vitiated by the fact that this independence as such is only possible if human beings exist. The being-in-itself of things becomes not just inexplicable but completely senseless without the existence of man; *which is not to say that the things themselves are dependent on man*." (Carman's emphasis). (Ibid., 168) (See AMK 202)

[82] Ibid., 168.

are rooted in metaphysical dualism and provide an incomplete reading of Heidegger's discussion

of truth. There is a third option, which *can* accept the pervasiveness of interpretation thesis,

which *can* account for the claims Heidegger makes concerning occurrent entities, which does *not*

rely on idealism or realism as a model of truth, and which actually *can* account for idealism and

realism *as well*. That is, beyond interpretation there is nothing – there is transcendence at the

deepest level, which is to say, there is the transcendence of being and the nothing. Although

senseless and meaningless, the nothing beyond interpretation is not empty. Quite the contrary,

the nothing is the concealment of possibility from which intelligibility, sense-making, actuality,

truth, ideas, and theories such as idealism and realism appear. The third, or rather (more in

keeping with Heidegger's own language) the *other* option proposes that beyond the activity of

interpretation, there is a basic passivity – that is not to say there are hidden things-in-themselves,

but deeper still, there is withdrawal *as such*.[83]

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[83] In order to further clarify the distinction of the *other* option mentioned above, I will reinterpret the citation from *Introduction to Metaphysics* (IM 88-89) quoted by Blattner and re-quoted by Carman. Blattner's reading of the passage leaves out at least two points. First, Heidegger contends that our understanding of being is not an actuality (like the fact that we have ears instead of some other type of hearing device), but a *necessity*. Notably the *content* of the understanding of being is importantly absent; instead, Heidegger contends that understanding is an "opening up of Being," an opening necessary to the being of Dasein. As an "opening up" of being, understanding is a *way* to disclose being. The crucial point is that *being can be disclosed in more than one way*. Likewise, temporality is the site of the opening, and (similar to being or inasmuch as it *is* being) it too *can be disclosed in more than one way*. As Heidegger writes: "*Temporality* has manifested itself as this basis and accordingly as the meaning of the Being of care. So that which our *preparatory* existential analytic of Dasein contributed *before* temporality was laid bare, has now been *taken back* into temporality as the primordial structure of Dasein's totality of Being. In terms of the possible ways in which primordial time can temporalize itself, we have provided the 'grounds' for those structures which were just 'pointed out' in our earlier treatment. Nevertheless, our way of exhibiting the constitution of Dasein's Being remains only *one way* which we may take." (BT 486-487/SZ 436) In fact, temporality *must* be revealed in more than one way in order to capture its essential nature. As Heidegger suggests in his description of the way of philosophy: "One must seek a *way* of casting light on the fundamental question of ontology, and this is the way one must *go*. Whether this is the *only* way or even the right one at all, can be decided only *after one has gone along it*. The conflict as to the Interpretation of Being cannot be allayed, *because it has not yet been enkindled*. And in the end this is not the kind of conflict one can 'bluster into'; it is of the kind which cannot get enkindled unless preparations are made for it. Towards this alone the foregoing investigation is *on the way*." (BT 487-488/SZ

Taking a step back to look at the pragmatist view of temporality and meaning in general, I can suppose that for the pragmatist there is nothing beyond *ways* of understanding – understanding *is* the meaning of being and the pervasive character of life. What we understand we *can* do. What we do not understand we *cannot* do. Notably, the pragmatist reading inscribes a dichotomy between what we *can* and *cannot* understand, and decidedly focusses on what we *can* understand (*i.e.*, they contend that what we cannot understand is not (an important) part of our ontological structure). Therefore, for the pragmatist, things we *cannot* understand have no meaning, do not appear as part of the ontological picture, and do no phenomenological work. And yet, even in the pragmatist view of existence, transcendence is pervasive. The fact is that our understanding is always in the process of understanding what it *does* and *does not* understand. Understanding is always *more* than what it understands. Even pragmatism (albeit unbeknownst to itself) reveals the basic character of transcendence.

My reading of Heidegger thus far, on the other hand, focusses on what we *cannot* understand, or do, or be, on what is *not*, and on the fundamental transcendence of the nothing. I

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437) Second, Heidegger argues that our understanding of being (a necessary condition of being) is definite; given the indefinite nature of the meaning of being, our definite understanding is, "unbeknownst to us", limited and "rules us from the ground up." In other words, our average understanding of being is blind to its averageness and roots us in our ordinary way of thinking and being. The fixity of our definite understanding of being is only one way to understand ourselves and the meaning of being; there are other ways of understanding being – in fact, these concealed, other ways of understanding being *belong* to being and thus are part of the meaning of being (as Heidegger writes, "even Nothing "belongs" to "Being""). The point is that temporality is not just a character of Dasein, but a way that Dasein always already discovers itself. The way Dasein discovers itself is not entirely (or mostly) determined by Dasein, but more properly, it is delivered from the history of temporality, a history granted from the unmasterable withdrawal of being. Dasein does not discover temporality, but is discovered by temporality. As Heidegger poses, "what lies unexposed as the ground of the essence of stability and the essence of presence, other than time?" (IM 220) To appropriate Blattner's language, without temporality, Dasein does not obtain.

understand my reading as part of a path of transcendent readings of Heidegger.[84] Transcendent readings of Heidegger treat meaning not only as it appears, but also as it disappears. By extension, these readings investigate temporality not only as it appears as part of the everyday, practical world, but also as it disappears from the utility of ordinary phenomena, as it withdraws from Dasein, and refuses disclosure. Moreover, transcendent readings understand temporality as the underpinning condition of possibility of everyday practices and sense-making *as such*. As I will show in the next section, by this view, temporality is not a way of making sense of the way we make sense of the world, but the basic reason there *is* sense-making and a world that makes sense.[85]

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[84] The critics I sometimes describe as non-pragmatist read Heidegger as (generally) concerned with the problem of transcendence. Whether it is the question of affectivity (Ratcliffe), meaning (Sheehan), being (Pöggeler), or the 'not' (Macdonald), these critics share the insight that Heidegger is *really* interested in what does not show itself, what hides, retreats, refuses, or withdraws from our phenomenological efforts. In a word, Heidegger is really interested in the transcendence of ordinary transcendence. Although the critics mentioned might not agree about what exactly Heidegger is doing, they *do* share the view that Heidegger has an ongoing and deep concern for concealment, *i.e.*, the root closure [*lethe*] in disclosure [*aletheia*]. In this way, the critics participate in a path of transcendent readings of Heidegger.

[85] As Heidegger writes: "In authentic *understanding* projects itself upon that with which one can concern oneself, or upon what is feasible, urgent, or indispensable in our everyday business. But that with which we concern ourselves is as it is for the sake of that potentiality-for-Being which cares. This potentiality lets Dasein come towards itself in its concernful Being-alongside that with which it is concerned." (BT 386/SZ 337)

Section 3: Another version of temporality (prioritizing transcendence)

As I discussed in the previous section, one difference between pragmatist and transcendent critics of Heidegger is clearly shown in how they treat temporality. In the former case, although the question of occurrent entities beyond interpretation and temporality (*i.e.*, a version of Kant's thing-in-itself) is debatable, the point of concurrence between pragmatist critics is that temporality is *determined* or appropriated by humans. In the case of transcendent readings, temporality is described as a transcendent process *from which* human meaning appears. Thus, rather than describe it as a human-centered practice (which, as we discovered, is ultimately untenable), I will investigate temporality ontologically in its unifying and ecstatic structure, that is, as the self-transcendence of possibility which, on one level, is appropriated by humans for the preservation of their significant world and meaningful lives and, on a deeper lever, appropriates humans for the preservation of itself – *i.e.*, being (understood as temporality) *as such*.

To state the issue clearly, the primary goal of the present section is to clarify the relation between temporality and the problem of transcendence, and to bring our discussion of the problem of transcendence to bear on the central topic of the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, specifically, temporality. In order to accomplish the goal, I will investigate transcendent readings of temporality; that is to say, I will explore readings of temporality that prioritize the basic transcendence of possibility. My path will include an exploration of the process of repetition [*Wiederholung*] as the movement of transcendence. Repetition will show itself as the (basic character of the) becoming (Daniel O. Dahlstrom), primary projection (Stephan Käufer), clearing

or opening (Thomas Sheehan), and ontological difference (Otto Pöggeler). I will furthermore

argue that repetition opens a way into the question concerning existential holism (*i.e.*, what

makes being a whole?), a problem which is itself another way of approaching the problem of

transcendence. Finally, my inquiry will demonstrate that, as Heidegger writes, (the problem of)

transcendence can be understood "as signifying what is unique to *human* Dasein – unique not as

one among other possible, and occasionally actualized, types of behavior but as a *basic*

constitutive feature of Dasein that happens prior to all behaviour"[86] insofar as transcendence

opens the possibility of freedom and responsibility. Thus, I will argue temporality makes

possible (the connection between) meaning, normativity and the negativity of existence (*i.e.*, the

'not' and the nothing), and that temporality is itself an expression of transcendence *as such*.

3.1 Temporality and the problem of existential holism (a version of the problem of transcendence):

One way to approach temporality is to consider it in the context of the history of

philosophy, a history Heidegger envisions deconstructing. Temporality is, in many ways,

Heidegger's response to the traditional (mis)conception of being, that is, the view that being is a

type of presence.[87] According to Heidegger, the misunderstanding of being can be traced to

ordinary thinking and the tendency of the public to level down possibilities to the averageness of

present actualities.[88] Nevertheless, as one critic highlights, Heidegger finds the misunderstanding

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[86] ER 35-37/WG 34-36

[87] See Daniel O. Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness, from *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*," in *Heidegger's Being and Time: Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt, 155 (Lanham: The Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group, 2005).

[88] As Heidegger describes: "by exhibiting the positive phenomenon of the closest everyday Being-in-the-world, we have made it possible to get an insight into the reason why an ontological Interpretation of this state of Being has

of being and the fallenness of average life revealing of a deeper condition – the phenomenon of care. As Heidegger sees it, regardless of how one understands or misunderstands being, one point is certain – humans care about their being.[89] As Heidegger writes, "no sooner has Dasein expressed anything about itself to itself, than it has already interpreted itself as *care* (*cura*), even though it has done so only pre-ontologically."[90] Another way to put it is, unlike the pragmatist critics who take for granted the pervasiveness (and self-explanation) of human practice, Heidegger's temporality reveals that all conceptions of time, and all conceptions of life, are derived from temporality – temporality is the unifying horizon from which existence and being *as a whole* arises. In order to give explanation for his conception of temporality, then, Heidegger must explain the unity of the levels of primordiality – from the existentiell to the ontological – and the unity of the structure of Dasein as it exists at all levels of primordiality.[91] In other words, Heidegger must address the problem of existential holism – *i.e.*, how Dasein is not just a sum of its parts, how the parts of Dasein relate and integrate into a dynamic whole, and what the meaning of the whole might be, given that part of the whole remains hidden.

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been missing. *This very state of Being, in its everyday kind of Being, is what proximally misses itself and covers itself up*." (BT 168/SZ 130)

[89] Dahlstrom puts it in the following way: "To be-here is not to run around aimlessly without origins or prospects, nor is being-here a senseless play of presences and absences. To be-here is to be someone thrown into the world and falling prey to it, yet for whom what "always already and always still" matters is for her herself to be." (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 155)

[90] BT 227/SZ 183.

[91] As Dahlstrom explains, Heidegger must show "how the very notion of time that lends credence to the equation of being with presence is derivative of the timeliness of being-here" and moreover, "it is necessary for him to elaborate the content of this original, existential truth if he is to make good on his claim that it is more basic than propositional or perceptual truths." (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 156)

Heidegger explicitly addresses the problem of existential holism in his description of authentic temporality.[92] To be clear, temporality for the most part is concealed by the fixity of ordinary ways of thinking. In the busyness of average life, time is meaningful in terms of human activity (*i.e.*, world-time), which conceals the fact that there *is* time at all. We have times that make up and break up the day – time to get up, time to go to work, time to eat – but the timeliness of world-time is most of the time concealed by the averageness of our daily activities. In a sense, there is no time to think about time. Thus, not only originary-time (*i.e.*, authentic temporality, fundamental temporality, the ground of being), but also world-time is concealed by ordinary life. World-time only shows itself alongside the appearance of originary-time in the confrontation with death.[93] I must therefore investigate the relation between death and authentic temporality in order to address the problem of existential holism.[94]

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[92] As Dahlstrom describes, "Because resolutely, genuinely being-here amounts to anticipating this possibility (the end of one's possibilities), it can be described as a way of coming to the potential that is most properly one's own, and, in that sense, authentically becoming or, as it might be put more colloquially, "genuinely coming into one's own."" (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 157). Or, as Heidegger writes: "What makes this authentic Being-a-whole of Dasein possible with regard to the unity of its articulated structural whole? Anticipatory resoluteness, when taken formally and existentially, without our constantly designating its full structural content, is *Being towards* one's constantly designating its full structural content, is *Being towards* one's ownmost, distinctive potentiality-for-Being. This sort of thing is possible only in that Dasein *can*, *indeed*, come towards itself in its ownmost possibility, and that it can put up with this possibility as a possibility in thus letting itself come towards itself – in other words, that it exists." (BT 372/SZ 325) For a clear overview of temporality and the problem of existential holism, see Magda King, *A Guide to Heidegger's Being and Time*, (New York: SUNY presss, 2001). See especially chapter 12, "Authentic Ability-to-Be-a-Whole and Temporality as the Meaning of Care."

[93] In Heidegger's words: "This letting-itself-*come-towards*-itself is that distinctive possibility which it puts up with, is the primordial phenomenon of the *future as coming towards*. If either authentic or inauthentic *Being-towards-death* belongs to Dasein's Being, then such Being towards-death is possible only as something *futural* [als *zukünftiges*], in the sense which we have now indicated, and which we have still to define more closely. By the term 'futural', we do no here have in view a "now" which has *not yet* become 'actual' and which sometime *will be* for the first time. We have in view the coming [Kunft] in which Dasein, in its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, comes towards itself. Ancticipating makes Dasein *authentically* futural, and in such a way that the anticipating itself is possible only in so far as Dasien, *as being*, is always coming towards itself – that is to say, in so far as it is futural in its Being in general." (BT 372-373/SZ 325)

[94] For another interesting discussion of the relation between death and temporality, see Joanna Hodge's article, "Heideggerian Temporalities: Genesis and Structure of a Thinking of Many Dimensional Time" (Joanna Hodge, "Heideggerian Temporalities: Genesis and Structure of a Thinking of Many Dimensional Time," *Research in*

Why does death open the possibility of genuine timeliness? Why does it disclose the

unity of being? Heidegger contends that death opens the possibility of becoming what we are

already,[95] or more simply, death *is* what we always *are* already – we are finite, incomplete,

undifferentiated, self-secluding, self-nullifying beings.[96] Death reveals the process of existence

into which we are thrown, and which we do not for the most part acknowledge as something we

can and must differentiate for ourselves. In our authentic encounter with death, we understand

for the first time that life is a process of becoming, a happening that *happens* despite us.[97] As one

critic argues, the happening is a passive process of repetition.[98] Indeed, Daniel O. Dahlstrom

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Phenomenology 1, vol. 29 (1999): 119-141), in which Hodge argues that the interplay of direction, repetition and oscillation lays the foundation and structure of temporality. She contends that thinking about temporality in terms of being-towards-death frames the question of the meaning of Being as an issue of finitude, and, therefore, conceals the ground of Being, which she understands as movement. Rather, she believes that we need to re-think temporality as overlaying, oscillating movement. From this standpoint, she claims, we can avoid thinking about death as an accomplishment, as a mature end towards which we strive.

[95] Dahlstrom writes: "The original phenomenon of the future thus consists in someone holding out the possibility of her death, allowing this potential that is most her own to come to her. In effect, she comes to be or becomes existentially who she already is becoming existentially. What does it meant allow this direst of possibilities to come to us? It means not running away from death. An inkling of what is meant can be gathered from the commonplace observation at funerals that death puts everything into perspective, as we see it coming, inevitably, to us. Inasmuch as a person allows herself – her genuine manner of being-here – to come to her in this way, she anticipates it." (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 157)

[96] As Heidegger writes: "Care is Being-towards-death. We have defined "anticipatory resoluteness" as authentic Being towards the possibility which we have chraterized as Dasein's utter impossibility. In such Being-towards-its-end, Dasein exists in a way which is authentically whole as that entity which it can be when 'thrown into death'. This entity does not have an end at which it just stops, but it *exists finitely*. The authentic future is temporalized primarily by that temporality which makes up the meaning of anticipatory resoluteness; it thus reveals itself *as finite*." (BT 378/SZ 329-330)

[97] In his rich article "Dead Transcendence: Blanchot, Heidegger, and the Reverse of Language" (William S. Allen, "Dead Transcendence: Blanchot, Heidegger, and the Reverse of Language," *Research in Phenomenology* 1, vol. 39 (2009): 69-98), William S. Allen examines Heidegger's reading of the myth of Er as a way into the ambivalence of truth. He describes the double bind of truth, between concealment and unconcealment, as an endless reversal. Therefore, with every step towards disclosure and self-realization, one moves further into closure and self-nullification. As an example of the double bind, language, contends Allen, is a type of dead transcendence – its disclosure bears the mark of finitude. Once uttered, the death of the word, the end of its meaning has already begun. As Allen writes, "For literature reveals the transcendence of the world: that there is transcendence but it is dead, that it recoils onto itself, leaving the edges of thought permeated by an endlessness, the night of finitude without finitude." (Allen, "Dead Transcendence," 98)

[98] Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 158-159.

pushes further into the idea of the *process of becoming* of temporality and reveals the basic

passivity of temporality. In particular, he calls attention to one of Heidegger's hyphenated

expressions, namely "*is*-as-I-*am*-having-been" [*als ich bin-gewesen*], and finds in it a telling tale,

which, parenthetically, cannot be told by a pragmatist reading.[99] The expression not only

captures the primacy of thrownness and the pervasiveness of passivity – that is to say, what I *am*

is what I always *have been*, which is itself that which grants me possibilities – but it also

intimates the essential repetition of being.[100]

Repetition is, in a sense, the process of becoming that characterizes the constitutive

moment of authentic temporality – or in other words, the confrontation with death *is* the

repetition of being. To put the point clearly: the repetition of being (that occurs in the authentic

encounter with death) reveals temporality.[101] Following this line of thought, repetition also

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[99] Ibid., 158-159. In Heidegger's words: "Anticipatory resoluteness understands Dasein in its own essential Being-guilty. This understanding means that in existing one takes over Being-guilty; it means *being* the thrown basis of nullity. But taking over thrownness signifies *being* Dasien authentically *as it already was*. Taking over thrownness, however, is possible only in such a way that the futural Dasein can *be* its ownmost 'as-it-already-was' – that is to say, its 'been' [sein "Gewesen"]. Only in so far as Dasein *is* as an "I-am-as-having-been", can Dasein come towards itself futurally in such a way that it comes *back*. As authentically futural, Dasein *is* authentically as "*having been*". Anticipation of one's uttermost and ownmost possibility is coming back understandingly to one's ownmost "been". Only so far as it is futural can Dasein *be* authentically as having been. The character of "having been" arises, in a certain way, from the future." (BT 373/SZ 325-326)

[100] Dahlstrom contends: "Coming to oneself (the authentic sense of the future) means, at the same time, coming *back* to who one already is." (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 159)

[101] Heidegger contends: "A finite, knowing creature can only relate itself to a being which it itself is not, and which it also has not created, if this being which is already at hand can be encountered from out of itself. However, in order to be able to encounter this being as the being it is, it must already be "recognized" generally and in advance as a being, i.e., with respect to the constitution of its Being. But this implies: ontological knowledge, which here is always pre-ontological, is the condition for the possibility that in general something like a being can itself stand in opposition to a finite creature. Finite creatures need this basic faculty of a turning-toward… which lets-[something]-stand-in-opposition. In this original turning-toward, the finite creature first allows a space for play [*Spielraum*] within which something can "correspond" to it. To hold oneself in advance in such a play-space, to form it originally, is none other than the transcendence which marks all finite comportment to beings. If, however, the possibility of ontological knowledge is grounded in pure synthesis and if ontological knowledge nevertheless constitutes precisely the letting-stand-against of…, then the pure synthesis must be revealed as that which complies with and supports the unified whole of the inner, essential structure of transcendence. Through the elucidation of this structure of pure synthesis, the innermost essence of the finitude of reason is then unveiled." (KM 50/KPM 70-71)

discloses (existential) normativity. That is to say, repetition (or being-towards-death) shows us

that what we *should* be is what we *are* already, and what we *are* already is what we are *not yet*.

To push the point further, we *should* be what we are *not*, which is to say we should *repeat* the

meaning of (*non*)-being. Even in the average everyday, repetition is pervasive; in effect, we

(always already) appropriate average possibilities from an ordinary, pre-ontological

understanding that is given to us from the network of relations. We *repeat* what we already

understand of the world, and our understanding of the world is a *repetition* of what the world

grants us *as* intelligible possibility. At every level of existence, then, repetition characterizes the

transcendence of possibility, a basic character disclosed in the confrontation with death.[102]

How, then, does repetition relate to the problem of existential holism? The important

point is that temporality is unified (and likewise, being is a unified whole) inasmuch as the future

is given from the past, which is revealed in the present. The three temporal ecstases are

interrelated, and incomplete without the others – the future cannot be understood without the

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[102] Indeed, Dahlstrom describes five aspects of genuine timeliness and, tellingly, all five aspects are characterized by repetition (Dahlstrom, "Genuine Timeliness," 164). A brief look at Dahlstrom's description of the five aspects will help us clarify the pervasiveness of repetition as it relates to temporality and transcendence. First, authentic temporality is a unified structure – that is to say, there is no temporal chronology or sequential order to the modes of its being. The repetition of authentic temporality is an integral whole. Second, the future is prioritized insofar as it discloses the primacy of the past. In this way, then, future possibility is prioritized given the repetition of the past that its disclosure entails. Third, being-towards-death opens the possibility of authentic temporality, which itself is a repetition of a basic possibility of being. Fourth, temporality is essentially transcendent – it is an ecstatical unity. Authentic temporality repeats its self-transcendence. Fifth, authentic temporality is essentially incomplete, beyond and outside itself, a process of becoming and unfolding – it is and is not what it is. Inasmuch as it is not what it is, authentic temporality is a nullity. Thus, authentic temporality is a process of repeating the self-secluding 'not' of being. On authentic temporality, Heidegger writes: "The authentic coming-towards-itself of anticipatory resoluteness is at the same time a coming-back to one's ownmost Self, which has been thrown into its individualization. This ecstasis makes it possible for Dasein to be able to take over resolutely that entity which it already is. In ancitipating, Dasein *brings* itself *again forth* into its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. If *Being*-as-haviing-been is authentic, we call it "*repetition*". But when one projects oneself inauthentically towards those possibilities which have been drawn from the object of concern in making it present, this is possible only because Dasein has *forgotten* itself in its ownmost *thrown* potentiality-for-Being. This forgetting is not nothing, nor is it just a failure to remember; it is rather a 'positive' ecstastical mode of one's having been – a mode with a character of its own." (BT 388/SZ 338-339)

ground of its past, the past cannot be understood without its expression in the future, and both future and past are understood *as such* given the disclosure of the presencing of Dasein. The process of becoming or unfolding of temporality is a repetition of what is already there – it repeats or reveals some possibilities while forgetting or concealing other possibilities.[103] Therefore, the reason temporality is a unified whole is shown in the repetition of the process of transcendence – life is always already beyond itself and transcendent inasmuch as it presses into possibilities (while concealing other possibilities), a process of disclosure, which is essentially the repetition of what is always already there. Possibility discloses deliverance. Moreover, the connection between what we *are* and what we *should* be is shown through a transcendent process of repetition. Repetition *repeats* what is always already becoming, and crucially, we can *choose* the repetition of being (*i.e.*, we can choose to choose ourselves).When Heidegger discusses freedom, then, he means to suggest that we can choose to repeat ourselves in a way that explicitly opens possibility – an issue I will consider at the end of the section.[104]

Although temporality *does* imply a unity of being (as Dahlstrom argues), it is not clear why temporality *must* be the way it is described by Heidegger. It is possible that temporality does not correspond with the way things are *as they are*. As Stephan Käufer puts it, "Heidegger

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[103] As Heidegger writes: "Just as expecting is possible only on the basis of awaiting, *remembering* is possible only on that of forgetting, *and not vice versa*; for in the mode of having-forgotten, one's having been 'discloses' primarily the horizon into which a Dasien lost in the 'superficiality' of its object of concern, can bring itself by remembering. The *awaiting which forgets and makes present* is an ecstatical unity in its own right, in accordance with which inauthentic understanding temporalizes itself with regard to its temporality. The unity of these ecstases closes off one's authentic potentiality-for-Being, and is thus the existential condition for the possibility of irresoluteness. Though inauthentic concernful understanding determines itself in the light of making present the object of concern, the temporalizing of the understanding is performed primarily in the future." (BT 389/SZ 339)

[104] As Heidegger writes: "Anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its *Being towards* its ownmost potentiality-for0Being – that is, its *Being-free for* the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself. Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its *Being-free for* (*propensio in…*) the authenticity of its Being, and for this authenticity as a possibility which it always is." (BT 232/SZ 188)

claims that temporality somehow *unifies* the various aspects of care, but it is hard to see what

justifies this claim."[105] Another way to approach the problem of existential holism, as Käufer

also argues, is to investigate the priority of projection of the authentic self. Although Käufer

agrees that temporality captures the meaning of being, he argues that in order to understand the

unity of being we must investigate Heidegger's discussion of projection.[106] He argues that

projection *is* the way humans understand the world, and this human activity *can only* appears *as

it is* if being is a unified whole.[107] Projection (or as I called it, average, existentiell, banal, or

ordinary meaning) discloses the ordinary understanding of the average everyday, that is, how we

understand things as they relate to the web of significance of the world.[108] Projection is given in

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[105] Stephan Käufer, "Temporality as the Ontological Sense of Care," in *The Cambridge Companion to Being and Time*, ed. Mark A. Wrathall, 338 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[106] As Heidegger writes in *Being and Time*: "If f the term "understanding" is taken in a way which is primordially existential, it means *to be projecting towards a potentiality-for-Being for the sake of which any Dasein exists*. In understanding, one's own potentiality-for-Being is disclosed in such a way that one's Dasein always knows understandingly what it is capable of. It 'knows' this, however, not by having discovered some fact, but by maintaining itself in an existentiell possibility." (BT 385/SZ 336)

[107] In his article (Käufer, "Temporality as the Ontological Sense of Care," 339-340), Käufer investigates Heidegger's transcendental argument for the existential unity of temporality. As Käufer contends, the densest part of the argument is found in par. 65 of *Being and Time* in which Heidegger argues "that temporality is the transcendental condition of existence, that it unifies the various aspects of existence, and that it constitutes the structure of the self." (339) As a way into the discussion Käufer sets the context for the transcendental argument by examining the "relation between projection and primary projection." (340)

[108] Heidegger contends in *The Essence of Reasons*: "As the totality of what exists for the sake of a Dasein at any given time, the world is brought by Dasein before Dasein itself. This "bringing itself before itself" of world is the primordial project of the possibilities of Dasein, insofar as Dasein can relate itself to being from within the midst of being. The project of world, though it does not grasp what is projected explicitly, does *throw* the projected world *over* being. This, in turn, allows being to manifest itself. The happening of the projecting "throwing the world over being," in which the Being of Dasein arises, we call Being-in-the-world. "Dasein transcends" means: the essence of its Being is such that it "*forms the world*," in the sense that it lets world happen and through the world provides itself with an original view (form) which does not grasp explicitly, yet serves as a model for, all of manifest being, Dasein included." (ER 89/WG 88)

the process of existence within which we are always already pressing into average possibilities and living meaningful lives.[109]

Primary projection, on the other hand, (or what I discussed as deep, fundamental, or ontological meaning) understands its understanding. That is to say, primary projection understands the basic condition of possibility of understanding and how this basic condition opens the possibility of being.[110] Primary projection understands that the ground of all projects (*i.e.*, the reason that humans *can* have purposeful activity, that life *can* be replete with tasks and projects, that being *is* an essentially incomplete project) is temporality. As Käufer argues, the context for Heidegger's argument that the unity of existence is found in temporality is therefore shown in Heidegger's conception of the ontological or authentic understanding of being, *i.e.*, the primary projection of the understanding of being [*Verstehen von Sein*].

The question Heidegger must therefore address is what allows us to understand ourselves and our possibilities in the way that we can and do?[111] Heidegger finds his answer in the care

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[109] As Käufer writes: "The relation between projection and primary projection parallels the relation between understanding and understanding of being. The primary projection is the projection of the understanding of being. I understand an *entity* insofar as I understand what it is, that is, understand it in its *being*; so each instance of understanding an entity is also an instance of understanding the being of that entity. I understand the chalk, that is, I am familiar with classrooms, blackboards, and lecturing; this means that I understand the being of the chalk, that is, that I skillfully disclose it as an available piece of equipment to be used in determinate ways within a holistic context of involvements" (Käufer, "Temporality as the Ontological Sense of Care," 340) (Incidentally, this much, a pragmatist reading would have no trouble agreeing with). Projection is a type of understanding that does not understand that it understands.

[110] As Käufer writes: "Further, each instance of understanding the *being of an entity* requires a more basic understanding of *being in general*. Classrooms, blackboards, and lecturing can only make sense of the chalk insofar as they make sense to me at all. And they make sense to me insofar as they constitute possible ways for me to be. This general background understanding is my understanding of being. It consists of basic abilities that disclose background practices as purposive, existential possibilities. These basic abilities make up the primary projection." (Ibid., 340)

[111] As Käufer writes: "The question Heidegger poses in par. 65 is this: what basic structure explains how we disclose possibilities and understand ourselves as an ability to be those possibilities?" (Ibid., 341).

structure of being – in each case, Dasein cares about its projects, its life, and the meaning of

being. However, what unifies the care structure? Heidegger's response is: the self.[112] In each

case, *I* care about *my* projects, *my* life, and the meaning of being as it matters to *me*.[113] However,

the self, phenomenologically speaking, is *not* a subject or a substance. Rather, the self is always

already part of the care structure.[114] In other words, just as humans are delivered into the

significant process of existence and the network of worldly relations, the self is granted from the

care structure – a structure, which itself, is granted from the temporal process. To put it

otherwise, the self does *not* determine the care structure (or what matters or what is significant or

what to care about), but instead, the self is *deployed* by the care structure in the preservation

process of existence. Care appropriates the self; as Heidegger writes, "[when] fully conceived,

the care-structure includes the phenomenon of Selfhood."[115] As Käufer writes: "selfhood is

already implicit in the care-structure."[116] In other words, the self is not a willful, active, self-

determining self – although it can comport itself in these ways, it is not essentially this way. The

self, like temporality, like the event of life itself [*Ereignis*] is fundamentally passive – it *is* what

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[112] Heidegger contends: "How can Dasein exist as a unity in the ways and possibilities of its Being which we have mentioned? Manifestly, it can so exist only in such a way that it *is itself* this Being in its essential possibilities – that in each case *I* am this entity. The 'I' seems to 'hold together' the totality of the structural whole." (BT 365/SZ 317).

[113] Käufer writes: "Dasein is in each case mine, which means that each Dasein is a self and can have her possibilities as her own. In understanding, you disclose *your* possibilities; in being disposed, you disclose things as mattering to *you*; in being amidst entities, you encounter them in *your* concernful dealings." (Käufer, "Temporality and the Ontological Sense of Care," 343)

[114] As Heidegger puts it: "Dasein is *authentically itself* in the primordial indivdiualization of the reticent resoluteness which exacts anxiety of itself. *As something that keeps silent*, authentic *Being*-one's-Self is just the sort of thing that does not keep on saying 'I'; but in its reticence it '*is*' that thrown entity as which it can authentically be." (BT 369-370/SZ 322-323)

[115] BT 370/SZ 323

[116] Käufer, "Temporality as the Ontological Sense of Care," 343.

it is *not*. How, then, does Heidegger explain the unity of care through the self in his account of originary temporality?

By returning to the topic of projection, the originary unity of the self is discoverable in how one understands possibility. Put simply, the unity of care is found in what one cares about and how one goes about caring.[117] To break it down in more detail, what we care about depends on how we understand our possibilities. In daily life, we care about things in an average way, given public opinion, given ordinary thinking, and given average ways of being. In point of fact, we do not deploy care, we are deployed by care – we understand our possibilities from the givenness of average care, but we do not understand our understanding. In this way, the unity of the average self is found in the relation between our understanding and care of the possibilities of average existence, and the facticity from which we press (in a caring manner) into average possibilities.[118] However, average understanding has the possibility to understand itself – to

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[117] Käufer contends: "Heidegger claims that the interpretation of Dasein in Division I cannot be originary because it does not thematize existence as a whole. He proposes to remedy this shortcoming with the analysis of authentic Dasein. The phenomenological description of authentic existence in the chapters on death and guilt is meant to provide this explicit thematization of existence as a whole. Scholars disagree about how exactly authentic existence is more "whole" or complete than inauthentic existence, and I can only sketch the answer here. In the section on "Dasein as Understanding" (par 31) and again in "The Temporality of Understanding" (par. 68), Heidegger says that inauthentic, un-owned existence understands itself in terms of the world, or the successes and failures of its dealings, while authentic, owned existence understands itself in terms of its own being, namely the ability to be purposively (337). For example, if I exist inauthentically, I might understand myself as a successful college professor, or a second-rate race-car driver. If I exist authentically, I might also press into those possibilities and understand the world in light of these possibilities; however, I understand myself as purely being-possible, as the ability to pursue possibilities. Inauthentic Dasein identifies itself with a role or profession (college professor), while authentic Dasein identifies itself *entirely* as being-possible. So authentic existence comprises a thoroughgoing self-identification with being-possible. This is why authentic existence, which Heidegger characterizes as ability-to-be-wholly (*Ganzseinkonnen*), is constituted by forerunning into death and ability-to-be-guilty: these are two ways of disclosing possibilities that also disclose that beyond them I am nothing. Heidegger's "extreme" phenomenology of death and guilt in Division II thus thematizes existence as a *whole* because it makes explicit this thoroughgoing self-identification with possibilities. The analyses of Division I cover all aspects of care, but they do not show that these are *all* there is to existence" (Ibid., 342).

[118] As Käufer puts it: "The originary future consists of maintaining possibilities as possibilities and letting yourself come toward yourself. You can only come towards your *self* insofar as the originary future includes some kind of identification with the person, for whose sake you press into the possibility. The self-identification is given insofar

understand its (lack of) understanding. In the same vein, it has the possibility to understand it is

always more than it actually is; in effect, an essential part of being is that there *are* possibilities

that it is (necessarily) *not*. Deeper still, average understanding has the possibility to understand

that there *is* possibility rather than *nothing*. In point of fact, the possibility for self-understanding

unifies average everyday being with authentic being. Correspondingly, the authentic self is

appropriated by a similar process, with one important difference – it understands its own

appropriation *as* appropriation. The authentic self understands that the things it cares about and

the way it cares most of the time is granted by the averageness of daily life and the opinions of

the anonymous social form of the They [*das Man*]. It understands that it is for the most part not

itself. The authentic self *understands* that it does *not* deploy care, but rather that it is deployed *by*

care.[119]

Furthermore, the authentic self understands that average possibilities conceal a deeper

level of possibility – the fact that there *are* possibilities at all. In other words, the authentic self

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as the Dasein that you are *coming toward* is the one that you *already are*. In other words, the possibility of letting
yourself come toward yourself depends on the unity of the originary future and beenness. This is what Heidegger
means by saying that Dasein can only come toward itself "in such a way that it comes back." In our example, this
unity shows up readily. You lecture for the sake of "coming toward yourself" as a professor. At the same time, your
lecturing already discloses the situation in a "professorish" way, and so you are coming toward yourself as you
already find yourself. That the clock is inconveniently located, for example, is a matter of both your ability to lecture
(for the sake of being a professor) and your disposedness (finding things mattering the way they matter to
professors). This connection between the relevant ability and attunement is rooted in your ownership of the
possibility; *you* competently position your body, face the students, and make eye contact, and *you* are affected by the
solicitation of the clock behind you. Without this unity – if one person skillfully lectures while another is affected by
the solicitations of the clock – the clock would not show up as inconvenient. In fact, without some combination of
an ability and some kind of attunement, the clock would not show up at all. Hence, these two temporal ecstases
"release" the present." (Ibid., 352-353)

[119] As Heidegger describes: "As thrown, Dasein has indeed been delivered over to itself and to itself and to its
potentiality-for-Being, *but as Being-in-the-world*. As thrown, it has been submitted to a 'world', and exists factically
with Others. Proximally and for the most part the Self is lost in the "they". It understands itself in terms of those
possibilities of existence which 'circulate' in the 'average' public way of interpreting Dasein today. These
possibilities have mostly been made unrecognizable by ambiguity; yet they are well known to us. The authentic
existentiell understanding is so far from extricating itself from the way of interpreting Dasein which has come down
to us, that in each case it is in terms of this interpretation, against it, and yet again for it, that any possibility one has
chosen is seized upon in one's resolution." (BT 435/SZ 383)

understands that the average things it cares about are not authentically or ontologically meaningful, *i.e.*, they are contingent and subject to change if circumstances shift. What *really* matters, that is, what *is* non-contingently, authentically, ontologically meaningful is the fact that death is the limit of possibility – it grants the one possibility that is ultimately mine. The unity of the authentic self is therefore found in the way the self understands (and cares) about fundamental possibility (possibility opened by the encounter with death – the possibility of impossibility) and goes about pressing into its authentic possibilities.[120]

If I take a step back and attempt to describe the unity of the self *as such* (authentic, inauthentic or otherwise undifferentatied), I can suppose that the self is unified (and meaningful) in relation to its (past and future) possibilities, into which it is delivered and from which it discovers itself. In this way, the self is a process subtended by a ground of passivity; no matter how we choose to press into our possibilities, *that* we have *certain* possibilities and *not* others, and *that* we have possibilities *at all* is *not* our choice – this is the ultimate ground of temporality, a ground unaccounted for by the pragmatist reading. In being-towards-death, however, we *do* have the possibility of becoming ourselves, of unfolding our unfolding, of repeating what we are or, as Heidegger writes, we have the possibility of a "*reciprocative rejoinder*";[121] indeed, the mineness of death grants the unity of the self and the unity of the care structure. Death frees

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[120] Heidegger emphasizes the following: "*Only an entity which, in its Being, is essentially **futural** so that it is free for its death and can let itself be thrown back upon its factical "there" by shattering itself against death – that is to say, only an entity which, as futural, is equiprimordially in the process of **having-been**, can, by handing down to itself the possibility it has inherited, take over its own thrownness and be **in the moment of vision** for 'its time'. Only authentic temporality which is at the same time finite, makes possible something like fate – that is to say, authentic historicality.*" (BT 437/SZ 385)

[121] BT 438/SZ 386

temporality such that it *can* be disclosed in a primordial way.[122] To push the point further, then, what we are *not*, (*i.e.*, the possibility of our impossibility, our death) *unifies* the self (*my* self granted by death) and thus, it unifies the existential structure of Dasein (as a being of possibility) and the ontological whole of being (that which is given, rather than nothing).[123]

3.2 Temporality, passivity and the ontological difference (another way to think transcendence):

Although Dahlstrom and Käufer both discuss the basic passivity of being (which clearly sets them apart from pragmatist critics) and they both open an interesting response to the question of existential holism, neither thematizes fundamental passivity and the negativity of being *as an important part* of the unity of being. On the other hand, Thomas Sheehan and Otto Pöggeler both argue that the most substantial phenomenological work in the disclosure of (the

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[122] As Käufer writes: "Pressing into a possibility, you let yourself come toward yourself. In so doing, you identify yourself in terms of the possibility you project. Possibilities, however, are vulnerable or contingent. You may understand yourself in terms of your ability to be a professor, but that possibility is not essentially or unavoidably yours. You might lose interest, or lose your abilities, or the entire academic profession might go out of business, in which case this possibility ceases to be relevant and you can no longer exist for the sake of it. The only possibility that is unavoidably yours is this paradoxical one – that you exist as being-possible, as projecting and pressing into possibilities, without being able to safely be any one of the possibilities you disclose. This is death, the "unsurpassable" and "ownmost" possibility. In disclosing possibilities, you also understand this "nullity" that you cannot safely be any of your possibilities. Originary temporality is finite because you come toward yourself against the background of the limit or impossibility of your existence. "The originary and authentic future is the toward-yourself, toward your *self*, existing as the unsurpassable possibility of nullity." (Käufer, "Temporality and the Ontological Sense of Care," 357)

[123] Heidegger contends: "The resoluteness which come back to itself and hands itself down, then becomes the *repetition* of a possibility of existence that has come down to us. *Repeating is handing down explicitly* – that is to say, going back into the possibilities of the Dasein that has-been-there. The authentic repetition of a possibility of existence that has been – the possibility that Dasein may choose its hero – is grounded existentially in anticipatory resoluteness; for it is in resoluteness that one first chooses the choice which makes one free for the struggle of loyally following in the footsteps of that which can be repeated…. [The] repetition makes a *reciprocative rejoinder* to the possibility of that existence which has-been-there. But when such a rejoinder is made to this possibility in a resolution, it is made *in a moment of vision*; *and as such* it is at the same time a *disavowal* of that which in the "today", is working itself out as the 'past'. Repetition does not abandon itself to that which is past, nor does it aim at progress. In the moment of vision authentic existence is indifferent to both these alternatives." (BT 437-438/SZ 385-386)

unity of) being *as such* is accomplished by the passive withdrawal of being. Thomas Sheehan,

giving a reading of temporality (as it is discussed in *Being and Time*) that is highly informed by

Heidegger's later writings, argues that temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] is more aptly translated as the

opening or the clearing, terms that are most commonly used as the English translation of

Lichtung, and that, as we have seen, intimate a basic passivity from which possibility is opened

or cleared.[124] Although his argument is contentious especially given the fact that *Lichtung* is a

term commonly used in the later Heidegger's works (a fact that implies it is to be distinguished

in some way from the earlier *Zeitlichkeit*), Sheehan's argument is helpful inasmuch as it opens a

way into a discussion of the passive withdrawal of being understood as temporality. As the

clearing of possibility, as that which de-densifies the play of possibility such that some

possibilities *can* appear *as* possibilities while other possibilities disappear into concealment,

temporality is characterized by a basic passivity. In this way, temporality is an existential whole

insofar as the possibilities it discloses are grounded in the concealment of possibility. Put

otherwise, temporality is unified inasmuch as what appears in time is contingent on what

ultimately disappears from time. This goes for the historical unfolding of time as well – *i.e.*,

historicality.[125]

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[124] See Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).Amongst other parts of Heidegger's corpus, Sheehan cites "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" as proof that Heidegger's temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] should be understood as opening. See Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 97-99. Regardless of how *Zeitlichkeit* should be translated, the point is Heidegger certainly did not intend us to understand the term essentially. It is, as we have seen in the present section, a process or movement, a becoming and returning, a revealing and concealing, the presencing and withdrawal of being.

[125] Heidegger argues: "*Authentic Being-towards-death – that is to say, the finitude of temporality – is the hidden basis of Dasein's historicality.* Dasein does not first become historical in repetition; but because it is historical as temporal, it can take itself over in its history by repeating." (BT 438/SZ 386)

As Sheehan shows us, another way to approach the unity of the self and temporality is from the movement of its historically-situated self-disclosure.[126] In other words, the problem of existential holism can be addressed if we investigate the very way that temporality is always already temporalizing historically – *i.e.*, opening, clearing, appropriating, deploying, or revealing possibility from the ground of the passive withdrawal or refusal or concealment of being.[127] One way to put this would be to say that temporality is always a return to what we already are and must become.[128] Or again, unity is discovered in the transcendent process of being.[129] From his

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[126] As Heidegger writes in *The Essence of Reasons*: "There is no way that being, or nature in the widest sense, might become manifest if it could not find the *opportunity* to enter a world. Thus we say that being can, and often does, make an *entrance into a world*. "Entering a world" is not an event that takes place within (or outside) the realm of being but something that "happens with" being. And this happening is the existing of Dasein which, as existing, transcends. Only if, within the totality of being, a being "is" to some greater extent because it gets involved in Dasein's temporality can we speak of its "entering a world" having an hour and day. And being can manifest itself only if this prehistoric happening, which we call transcendence, happens, i.e., if being of the character of Being-in-the-world breaks into the entirety of being." (ER 90-91/WG 89-90)

[127] Sheehan's approach is particularly disclosive inasmuch as he reads the early Heidegger's temporality with a glance toward (*i.e.*, a forward-looking reading of) the later Heidegger. After all, the clearing is not a recurring theme in the early Heidegger or the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, but more explicitly thematized in the later Heidegger. Following the forward-looking reading, we have the advantage of interpretative foresight on Heidegger. Does this mean that temporality should be called the clearing? It *is* true that the clearing *is* part of temporality, as Sheehan shows us, and perhaps it *does* (amongst other terms such as *Ereignis*) replace temporality in the later works; however, in *Being and Time* and the surrounding works, temporality *is* indisputably a central term. That is to say, the term *Zeitlichkeit* can be translated in different ways; however, the root word of time [*Zeit*] is inherent to the term. Although Sheehan may be right that the terms *Zeit*, *Temporalität,* and *Zeitlichkeit* have basically nothing to do with the concept of time in the Aristotelian sense (*i.e.*, as objective time) (Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 97), it is arguable that Heidegger intended to imply subtle differences between terms such as *Zeitlichkeit* (translated as temporality) and *Lichtung* (translated as the clearing or opening), for example. Although they may ultimately refer to the same phenomenon, as Sheehan argues, the fact is the former term inherently suggests a temporal quality while the second term faintly suggests a spatial quality. To conflate the terms is to lose the possibility of interpreting the differences between them. Nevertheless, I agree that reading the clearing *into* temporality is a helpful approach to unraveling the complexity of the latter term, and moreover, I believe such a reading is ultimately revealing (despite its possible concealment).

[128] As Sheehan puts it: "We note two things: (1) *Zeitlichkeit* – "temporality" as ex-sistence's ("ex-static") maintaining of the openness of the open – is always in correlation with *Zeit* and *Temporalität***...** And (2) these latter two terms – "time" and the "time-character of the clearing" – are co-equal names for what *Being and Time* called the "horizon" for all forms of the being of things, and what the later Heidegger re-articulated as the clearing. Thus in Heidegger's early work "time" refers to the "horizonal" space within which being as the meaningful presence of things occurs, and "temporality" refers to ex-sistence's thrown-openness as sustaining that open space."(Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 98)

reading highly informed by the later Heidegger, or in other words, from his forward-looking

reading, Sheehan situates the discussion of temporality and transcendence in the Heidegger of

Being and Time in the context of Heidegger's corpus. In this way, Heidegger's discussion of the

relation between average meaning and things in *Being and Time* is contextualized in the

historical happening of life [*Ereignis*]. Read this way, the way we make sense of the world (*i.e.*,

as handy, useful, intelligible things) is given to us from the history of ideas.[130] The point is that

even Heidegger's description of the network of relations is granted from the event of life and the

history of thought. Put otherwise, the fact that things *are* useful is determined by a history of

thought that ordinarily thinks of things *as* useful, a history developed from the beginning of

philosophy.[131]

From the forward-looking reading, then, Sheehan reveals the insightful connection

between temporality and what temporality itself conceals – that is, the fact that it too is granted

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[129] As Heidegger writes: "In repetition, fateful destiny can be disclosed explicitly as bound up with the heritage which has come down to us. By repetition, Dasein first has its own history made manifest. Historizing is itself grounded existentially in the fact that Dasein, as temporal, is open ecstatically; so too is the disclosedness which belongs to historizing, or rather so too is the way in which we make this disclosedness our own." (BT 438/SZ 386)

[130] Sheehan writes: "For Heidegger the human need to understand things discursively – that is, as mediated to us *qua* meaningful – is an epistemological deficiency and a sign of ontological imperfection, at least by comparison with the highest model of perfection." (Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 100)

[131] Sheehan contends: "In order to know anything at all we must synthesize and distinguish the thing and its possible meanings; and in order to do that, we must (metaphorically spekaing) "traverse an open space" (*eine offene Weite zu durchgehen*) within which the synthesizing-and-distinguishing can take place. This "open space" is what Heidegger calls the clearing that lets us relate things and meanings. As thrown-open, human beings are a priori thrown into the labor of mediation, condemned to (or better, liberated for) making sense of things both practically and theoretically. This fatedness to mediation is emblematic of finitude, proof positive that we are not completely self-present and thus are bereft of a godlike intuition of the "unchanging reality" of things. Meaningful presence is never pure presence and actuality, but always open-ended, suffused with further possibilities. Our knowing is not perfect light but chiaroscuro, not the divine's eternal rest but an ever ongoing movement of disclosure coupled with an inevitable failure-to-disclose." (Ibid., 101)

from history and that history too is granted from nothing.[132] To bring his reading back to bear on

Heidegger's discussion in *Being and Time*, death (*i.e.*, that which opens the possibility for Dasein

to reveal temporality as the ground of being) is *itself* historically situated and, as such, death is

also appropriated by the happening of life for the preservation of existence. Indeed, Sheehan

pushes the point beyond the existential structure of Dasein and shows us that the clearing of

temporality is a mark of historical situatedness – put simply, death is also granted from the

historical process.[133] From another perspective, life is appropriated by the historical process of

the preservation of transcendence. This, then, is the key to the unity of being from Sheehan's

perspective – at all levels of existence, being is passively thrown into the happening of life.[134] In

the process of existence, in the movement of meaning, or in other words, in temporality, what we

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[132] Sheehan argues: "Ex-sistence as appropriated to sustaining the clearing is the basic occurrence of penedness: *das Grundegeschehnis der Wahrheit*. We are structurally dis-closed (*erschlossen*) and thus sustain the space within which the "as" can function and the discursive understanding of things can take place. As such, we are pan-hermeneutical. Our lived environment is not just a natural encircling ring of instinctual drives that befits an animal, but an open-ended as-structured world of possible meanings that we can talk about, argue over, and vote on. Whatever we meet, we meet under the rubric of "is manifest as" – that is, "is accessible as" and therefore "is meaningful as." Our existential thrown-openness entails that we can and must make sense of whatever we meet." (Ibid., 104-105)

[133] Heidegger describes the anxiety of facing the nothing in the following way: "Anxiety is that basic disposition which places us before the Nothing. The Being of the being, however, is in general only understandable – and herein lies the profoundest finitude of transcendence – if in the ground of its essence Dasein holds itself into the Nothing. This holding-itself-into-the-Nothing is no arbitrary and occasionally attempted "thinking" of the Nothing, but is rather an event which underlies all instances of finding oneself in the midst of beings which already are, and this event is one which must be elucidated according to its inner possibility in a fundamental-ontological analytic of Dasein." (KM 167/KPM 238)

[134] Heidegger writes: "The Self's resoluteness against the inconstancy of distraction is in itself a *steadiness which has been stretched along* -- the steadiness with which Dasein as fate 'incorporates' into its existence birth and death and their 'between', and holds them as thus 'incorporated', so that in such constancy Dasein is indeed in a moment of vision for what is world-historical in its current Situation. In the fateful repetition of possibilities that have been, Dasein brings itself back 'immediately' – that is to say, in a way that is temporally ecstatical – to what already has been before it. But when its heritage is thus handed down to itself, its 'birth' is *caught up into its existence* in coming back from the possibility of death (the possibility which is not to be outstripped), if only so that this existence may accept the thrownness of its own "there" in a way which is more free from Illusion." (BT 442-443/SZ 390-391)

are and *can* be is what we *always already* are – in this way, the event of life is characterized and unified by a pervasive passivity.[135]

Otto Pöggeler approaches the question of the unity of being from a different perspective, namely, from the standpoint of ontological difference (which is sometimes understood as the difference between ontic and ontological levels of being; on the other hand, I understand the fundamental difference to mean the difference between what *is* and what is *not*).[136] The question concerning the meaning of being is the question of the ground of being. The ground of being explains how being is and why it comes to be. In other words, the ground of being explains or establishes the fact there *is* being rather than *not*. To clarify the point, temporality (*i.e.*, the ground of being) reveals itself on at least two levels (*i.e.*, on average everyday and fundamental levels) a fact that shows us that there are different levels of disclosure (*i.e.*, average everyday disclosure and fundamental disclosure). Importantly, the fact that there are different levels of disclosure *discloses* the fact that there are different levels of closure. In existentiell disclosure, all other levels of disclosure are hidden – other possibilities are concealed. In ontological disclosure, the disclosure shows us that there *is* an insurmountable, unmasterable, self-secluding, basic concealment of being.[137] The fact that every disclosure implies a closure reveals the ontological

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[135] Although Sheehan insightfully elucidates the passivity of the meaning of being, he nevertheless argues that being is ultimately a meaning-process. For an interesting counter-argument to Sheehan's view, see Richard Capobianco's "Reaffirming "The Truth of Being"" (Richard Capobianco, "Reaffirming "The Truth of Being"," *Continental Philosophy Review* 3-4, vol. 47 (2014): 275-292) in which he argues that being is not a meaning-process, but rather the manifestness of the event (or the happening, or the gift) of truth, a conception I understand as resembling the basic transcendence of being.

[136] As I understand it, the distinction between classes of being (*i.e.*, between beings and being *as such*) really is the distinction between what (a thing or being) *is* and what (a thing or being) *is not*.

[137] As Heidegger puts it: "The *distinction between being and beings is temporalized in the temporalizing of temporality*. Only because this distinction is always already temporalizing itself on the basis of temporality and conjointly with temporality and is thus somehow projected and thus unveiled, can it be known expressly and explicitly and, as known, be interrogated and , as interrogated, investigated an, as investigated, conceptually

difference – what *is* appears while what is *not* disappears.[138] The ontological difference

understood in this way, that is, understood in its most basic character *is* the transcendence of

Dasein (*i.e.*, the self-surpassing nature of humans).[139]

How, then, does the ontological difference help clarify our discussion of the

transcendence of temporality and the problem of existential holism? Temporality can be

understood as the process of pressing into the ontological difference, of unfolding the 'not' and

the nothing. In other words, temporality, as a thrown-project, is at its basis, a self-transcending

nullity. The nullity is the gap between what is and what is not; it is the openness that Dasein

traverses and surpasses all the time in its daily activity and ongoing appropriation of the world.

As Dasein presses into the nullity of its being, or in other words, as Dasein temporalizes in its

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comprehended. The distinction between being and beings is *preontologically* there, without an explicit concept of being, *latent in the Dasein's existence*. As such it can become *an explicitly understood difference*. On the basis of temporality there belongs to the Dasein's existence the immediate unity of the understanding of being and comportment toward beings. Only because this distinction belongs to existence can the distinction become explicit in different ways. Because when this distinction between being and beings becomes explicit the terms distinguished contrast with each other, being thereby becomes a possible theme for conceptual comprehension (logos). For this reason we call the distinction between being and beings, when it is carried out explicitly, the *ontological difference* [die *ontologische Differenz*]." (BPP 319/GP 454-455)

[138] Heidegger contends: "The several possible levels and varieties of ontological truth in the broader sense reveal the richness of that which, as primordial truth, lies at the basis of all ontical truth. The unconcealedness of Being is the truth of the Being *of* being, whether or not the latter is real. In the unconcealedness of being, on the other hand, lies a prior unconcealedness of its Being. Each after its own fashion, ontical and ontological truth concern *being in* its Being and the *Being of* being. They belong together essentially, by reason of their relationship to the *difference between Being and being* (the Ontological Difference). The essence of truth, which is and must be bifurcated ontically and ontologically, is only possible given this difference. Yet if what is distinctive about Dasein is that it behaves toward being by understanding Being, then *the* ability to differentiate the two (in which the Ontological Difference becomes factical) must have struck the roots of its own possibility in the ground of the essence of Dasein. To anticipate, we name this ground of [reason for] the Ontological Difference the *transcendence* of Dasein." (ER 27-29/ WG 26-28)

[139] As Pöggeler writes: "Ontological and ontical truth belong together intrinsically on the basis of their relation to the difference between Being and beings, to the ontological difference. The ontological difference is held open by Dasein which as an understanding of Being relates to beings, and thus distinguishes Being and beings. Heidegger calls this differentiating the going beyond beings toward Being, the "transcendence" of Dasein. The question about ground leads to the question about truth, the question about truth to the question about the ontological difference, the question about the ontological difference to the question about the transcendence of Dasein." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 72-73)

average everydayness as thrown projection, what it *can* and *cannot* do is expressed. For the most part, average Dasein does not understand what it *cannot* do, and forgets that it has other possibilities than those given in the significance of the everyday world. In authentic temporality, however, Dasein can understand that it has possibilities, one of which is the possibility of impossibility. Dasein can understand its own self-transcending nullity such that it discloses the fact that it *is* what it is *not* – in the confrontation with death, Dasein can disclose the 'not'. Moreover, subtending the possibility of impossibility is the possibility that there is nothing rather than being. In authentic being, Dasein discloses that there *is* disclosure, that disclosure appears from the withdrawal of the 'not' of being (*i.e.*, the possibilities that do *not* appear *as* possibilities), and that the fact that there *are* (and are *not*) possibilities (*i.e.*, that there *is* being) is granted from the nothing. In short, the unity of being can be understood as the self-transcending unity of the ontological difference between what *is* and is *not*, a unity disclosed in the authentic confrontation with death.[140] Or, from a forward-looking perspective, the happening of history [*Ereignis*] is the grounding event that unifies being.[141]

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[140] Heidegger writes in *The Essence of Reasons*: "Transcendent Dasein (a tautological expression in itself) surpasses neither a "boundary" which stretches out before the subject and forces it to "remain in" (immanence) nor a "gap" which separates it from the object. Moreover, objects – objectified beings – are not that *towards which* surpassing happens. *What* is surpassed is simply *being itself*, i.e., every being which can be or become unconcealed to Dasein, *even and precisely* the very being as which Dasein "itself" exists. *In* surpassing, Dasein first attains to the being that *it* is; what it attains to is its "self." Transcendence constitutes selfhood. On the other hand, not only transcendence, but also surpassing, touches on a kind of being that Dasein "itself" is *not*. More accurately: only in and through surpassing can we distinguish and decide, within the realm of being, who and how a "self" is and what it is not. Only insofar as Dasein exists as a self can it relate "itself" *to* [behave *toward*] being – which in turn must be surpassed beforehand. Although Dasein *is* in the midst of, and surrounded by, being, it has always, as existing, already surpassed nature." (ER 37-39/WG 36-38)

[141] As Pöggeler writes: "Being, ground, and truth must be grasped from out of freedom's abysmal being-the-ground. There is Being only in being-the-ground of transcendence; "ground" is primordially a transcendental, essential character of Being itself, and only because of this can it give the principle of ground as a principle regarding beings. From this belonging-together of Being and ground, the question about truth must be asked in a primordial manner. The "transcendental" grounding – the articulation of the world which is there only together with founding and

The connection between the ontological difference and temporality can now be more carefully clarified. At the most banal level, the ontological difference can be understood as the difference between average possibilities (that are granted from the world and that appear meaningfully to everyday Dasein) and concealed possibilities (hidden by the fixity of ordinary thinking). Another way to look at it is as the difference between the facticity of the world (or the thrownness of Dasein, or *the past*) and the average everyday deployment of the world (or the existentiell projection of Dasein, or *the future*). On an existential level, the ontological difference is the difference between what Dasein *is* and is *not* – a negativity granted from the mineness of its death. In other words, in the confrontation with death and the disclosure of temporality, the fact that some possibilities are revealed and appear *as* possibilities while other possibilities remain concealed *is a fact that is itself disclosed*. Finally, from the ontological perspective, the ontological difference is the difference between being and the nothing. Indeed, the disclosure of temporality *discloses* that there *is* temporality rather than *nothing*. A common point emerges at all levels – the ontological difference appears in time. The difference between what I am and can be is expressed in terms of a present delivered from a past that opens up a future. The difference between the possibilities that appear and those that disappear is subtended by death – the utmost possibility of impossibility and the basic condition of the disclosure of temporality. The difference between the fact that there is being rather than nothing is granted from the history of temporality, that is, from historicality, or the ongoing historical process from which all forms of

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laying-hold-of-the-ground – is the ontological truth which, as the revelation of Being and of the constitution of Being, precedes every becoming-manifest of beings (the ontical truth)." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 73-74)

life are appropriated and all conceptions of being are granted. Thus, the ontological difference releases temporality to be thought in terms of the negativity of difference *as such*.[142]

Yet another common point emerges – at all levels of the ontological difference and at all levels of the corresponding temporal significations, there is a matching transcendence and, by extension, a corresponding normativity. The ordinary level of temporality and ontological difference signifies an average everyday transcendence – a transcendence and temporality and appropriation of the world that does not know itself as such. In ordinary life, human activity is characterized by the (existentiell) surpassing of present situations to appropriate future ones. Although the way humans surpass their present situation is granted to them from average understanding – an understanding they *must* appropriate given the way humans *are* – the fact remains that a process of (existentiell) transcendence occurs between present and projected worlds. At the level of authentic being, humans face the limit of their being – the absolute isolation and mineness of their ownmost death, which is a possibility humans *must* choose to face in order to *choose* to be what they are and thereby to *free* authentic possibility. In this way, authentic being transcends its average everyday self by disclosing it *as such*. Furthermore, by holding itself open to the incompletion of its existence and the possibility of choosing to be what it is – a finite being with possibilities that it flees most of the time – the possibility of the transcendence of Dasein appears *as* a possibility. Finally, on the level of ontological temporality,

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[142] Heidegger writes in *The Essence of Reasons*: "the Why arises of transcendental necessity. The Why even proliferates at its very source. Its basic forms are: "Why thus and not otherwise?", "Why this and not that?", "*Why anything at all and not nothing*?" A preconceptual, prior understanding of what something is, of how it is, and even of Being (Nothing) lies implicit in the Why, no matter how it is expressed. This understanding of Being makes the Why possible in the first place. That is, it contains the ultimate and primordial answer to every question. As the most primary *answer*, the understanding of Being lays the ultimate *foundation* for all inquiry. In it, transcendence is *founding*. And since Being and its constitution are disclosed in transcendence, transcendental founding is called *ontological truth*." (ER 115-117/WG 114-116)

the history of being is thought in terms of metaphysics and therefore appears in *one* way – a path

of thought that conceals other ways of being, a path that *must* be rethought and transcended in

order to *free* the other beginning of philosophy. In other words, the way being is thought by

history (being) *must* be transcended such that the other beginning of philosophy (nothing) is

opened as a possibility for the first time – this is the transcendence of being. Once again, a

primordial connection between temporality, possibility, normativity and transcendence

appears.[143]

3.3 Temporality, the question of freedom and surrendering to responsibility (*i.e.*, a passive normativity):

A new concept is hereby introduced, namely, freedom as it relates to transcendence and

temporality. Does freedom exist? If freedom is the choice to choose oneself – *i.e.*, what one is

already – can we call the choice a *free* choice? Can we call it a choice if we choose something

that we must be in any case? I will argue, as Pöggeler suggests, that the key to understanding

freedom is the passivity of freedom; in effect, freedom emerges not as the willful action of a

moral agent, but from the submission of Dasein to the abyss, of being to nothing, or again, of the

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[143] Pöggeler contends: "The transcendence of Dasein is that going beyond each and every being which has somehow always occurred. It is a going beyond from which Dasein can first of all return to all things, to other Daseins, and to itself in an authentic manner, and from which the question about Dasein's possible relationship can first be raised. Transcendence, the going beyond the totality of beings, occurs toward the world and is therefore being-in-the-world. World is not the totality of beings, but rather this totality in which Dasein has always found itself, understood in the how of its manifestness, in ever-differing degrees by means of an anticipating-enveloping understanding… Thus the world is joined together with the for-the-sake-of-itself which Dasein exists as. It is the "world-forming" surpassing of being, transcendence as being-in-the-world, which first grants beings an entrance to the world so that they can become manifest as themselves. Transcendence is, therefore, the primal occurrence, primordial history itself. .It must be grasped as freedom, for freedom contrasts itself with a "for-the-sake-of-itself" and thus lets the world hold sway." (Pöggeler, *Path of Thinking*, 73)

self to what one (always already) is.[144] I have therefore arrived at another way to approach the problem of transcendence – from freedom, the ground of grounds.

In what way is freedom the "freedom for grounds"?[145] Freedom is in many ways the basis of Heidegger's philosophy – that is to say, a basic reason that meaning and temporality and transcendence are interesting is because they open the possibility of freedom. What, then, does Heidegger mean by freedom? As one critic writes, there are at least two ways that freedom is described by Heidegger.[146] On one hand, freedom is discussed as an existential possibility revealed in authentic being (*i.e.*, "the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold it itself").[147] On the other hand, freedom is a basic character of existence insofar as humans *free* things for interpretation, they *free* possibility for understanding, and ultimately, they *free* life for appropriation (*i.e.*, "what we encounter within-the-world has, in its very Being, been freed for our concernful circumspection").[148] In this way, Dasein is the freeing. In order to understand Heidegger's argument, I must look more closely at his discussion of freedom in *Being and Time*, and as he describes it as the ground of grounds in *The Essence of Reasons*. The discussion is not

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[144] Pöggeler writes: "Freedom as letting the world hold sway is the origin of ground in general. It is "to ground," namely: 1. as founding or endowing (as the projection of the for-the-sake-of-which, as understandiing); 2. as the laying hold of ground (as infatuated with beings, state-of-mind); and 3. as the giving reasons for (articulation or classification, discourse). As the threefold yet unified grounding, freedom is being-the-ground, the origin of ground, the "ground of ground." Yet, it is finite, "thrown." That it is at all or that it occurs as transcendence is not a matter of freedom. As the ground of ground, it is the ground's staying away for its proper being-the-ground, the abyss [*Abgrund*]." (Ibid., 73)

[145] ER 119/WG 118

[146] Charles Guignon, "Heidegger's concept of freedom, 1927-1930," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 79-105 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[147] BT 232/SZ 188

[148] BT 114/SZ 83

meant to provide an exhaustive reading of Heidegger's concept of freedom. Rather, it is intended

to help motivate our discussion of the unity and transcendence of temporality.

In the Heidegger of *Being and Time* and surrounding works such as *The Essence of

Reasons*, the topic of freedom arises most explicitly in relation to authentic being and the choice

to choose oneself. Why would Heidegger call the choice of choosing what we always already are

a *free* choice? The first point that Heidegger clarifies is that his concept of freedom should not be

understood ordinarily, that is, as a willful act by an agent, or, as Charles Guignon puts it, as the

cause of an event where the act is "in accord with the agent's considered reasons or settled will

concerning what sort of person he or she wants to be."[149] The ordinary conception of freedom is

derivative of a more fundamental notion of freedom – authentic freedom, the freedom to be

oneself. Freedom, then, is constituted by an authentic or self-disclosive relation to the self where

I understand what I am – a being of possibility that conceals my possibility most of the time. As

a free and authentic being, the individual understands the passivity with which they do not

choose the things that matter, but rather allow the status quo conventions of the world to

determine what matters and how things matter most of the time. Authentic Dasein can choose to

hold itself open to the possibilities of its situatedness – that is to say, the free individual is free

precisely because she does not hold tight to any one possibility or possible world. Rather, the

free individual understands that the event of life is a constant process of renewal, a pressing into

possibility in which possibility is disclosed and foreclosed given the constantly shifting contexts

of the world. Freedom means I am free from the fixity of life as it appears such that the

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[149] Guignon, "Heidegger's concept of freedom," 81.

possibility of life as it disappears shows itself *as* a possibility. In other words, freedom frees me

from presence such that absence is opened.[150]

Importantly, freedom *is* a choice, but the content of the choice *is not* a choice. In effect,

the freedom to choose is *not* the freedom to choose any *particular* or *general* choice; the freedom

to choose is *always* the choice to choose *oneself*. If the choice is determined for us, does it count

as a free choice? How can a choice *be* free and yet *not* free? How does Heidegger resolve the

paradox? Dasein is always already a being of possibility, but most of the time loses itself to the

average world of the everyday and flees from the truth of its being – that is, it is a finite being in

time, and death grants life possibility. The choice is between choosing and *not* choosing to be

what it is: Dasein can decide for itself which choice it will make – in this way the choice is a free

choice inasmuch as it is determined by Dasein itself. Notably, however, the choice to choose to

be the paradox is not itself so much an action as it is a submission. Indeed, even Dasein's choice

to choose itself as a finite being is a possibility granted from a more fundamental condition of

being, namely, the happening or event of history (or as the later Heidegger conceives it,

Ereignis). The event of history, *i.e.* the process or movement or event of the history of life that

delivers Dasein into its situatedness, grants Dasein life and death, and is the ground upon which

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[150] As Guignon writes: "Authenticity involves a "choosing to choose" in which one stands behind one's own choices, owning them and owning up to them. It is this higher-order stance that is called "resoluteness" (SZ 270). Instead of drifting into the familiar activities approved by the conventions of the public world, the resolute individual fulfills her ability-to-be free by identifying herself with a specific range of choices while recognizing that, in doing so, she is renouncing others. It is in this sense that "freedom *is* only in the choice of **one** possibility – that is, in tolerating one's not having chosen the others and one's not being able to choose them" (SZ 285; Heidegger's emphasis). The clear-sightedness built into this sort of resolute stance is revealed by the fact that the second-order stance toward one's first-order choices is not a matter of obstinately clinging to any particular possibilities. Being open and clear-sighted with respect to the "situation" in which it finds itself means that Dasein "cannot *become rigid* as regards the situation, but must understand that the resolution… must be *held open* and free for the current factical possibility." In the commitment involved in resoluteness, "*one holds oneself free* for the possibility of *taking it back*" while at the same time "*repeating*" or constantly renewing its assessment of the situation and the meaningfulness of its commitment therein (SZ 307f)." (Guignon, "Freedom," 90)

Dasein understands itself, its possibilities and even its own death.[151] In other words, even authentic being and the freedom (to choose) to choose oneself are possibilities granted from history *as such*.[152] Pushing deeper into the idea, death and authentic being and the freedom (to choose) to choose oneself are appropriated by history inasmuch as they preserve the movement of the happening of life. Finally, history itself is delivered from a more fundamental level of being – the nothing that subtends being *as such*. Therefore, freedom is a choice delivered from a fundamental ground of passivity. Freedom is a type of submission, a self-surrendering.

Another way freedom is discussed in *Being and Time* and *The Essence of Reasons* is in terms of *freeing up* possibilities of the world – that is, as a loosening up of things, as the de-densification of possibility, as the releasing or clearing or opening of the context of meaning. Heidegger contends that the world frees possibility.[153] Although it is Dasein that discloses the world as a network of significations, the world frees the possibility of the network such that it

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[151] As Heidegger writes in the *Essence of Reasons*: "Reasons, which have their origin in transcendence, fall back on freedom, which, *as origin*, itself becomes a "reason." *Freedom is the reason for reasons*. Not, of course, in the sense of a formal, endless 'iteration.' Freedom is not a reason in any *one* of the ways of grounding, as we are always inclined to think, but is the grounding unity of the transcendental dispersion of grounding. As *this* kind of reason, however, freedom is the "abyss" of Dasein, its groundless or absent ground. It is not as though the only kind of free behavior were groundless [unmotivated] behavior. Instead, as transcendence, freedom provides Dasein, as "potentiality for being," with possibilities which gape open before its finite choice, i.e., in its destiny." (ER 127-129/ WG 126-128)

[152] As Guignon writes: "Heidegger does not think of the self as a point of consciousness occasionally sputtering out decisions and commitments. On the contrary, Heidegger characterizes the self as having a fundamental "historicity," where this refers to the entire unfolding of a life-story from its original experiencaes to its projeted, life-defining ends. Moreover, Dasein's historicity includes the world-historical context in which it is enmeshed and which defines its possible understanding of what is worthwhile. Authentic decisions and commitments arise out of this unfolding historicity and gain their normative force from the guidelines laid out in advance by the forms of life of a historical community." (Guignon, "Freedom," 91)

[153] As Heidegger writes in *The Essence of Reasons*: "As a totally, world "is" no particular being but rather that by means of and in terms of which Dasein *gives itself to understand* [*signify*] what beings it *can* behave toward and how it *can* behave toward them. That Dasein gives "*itself*" to understand in terms of "*its*" world means, then, that in approaching being through the world, Dasein makes a *self* of itself, i.e., a being which is free *to be*. The Being of Dasein lies in its "potentiality for being." Better: its Being is such that *its potentiality for being is an issue*." (ER 85/WVG 84)

can be disclosed *as such*. In other words, the facticity of the world is the ground from which

Dasein presses into meaningful possibilities in the mattering world. The thrownness of Dasein is

granted from the facticity of the world, which is to say that Dasein is thrown from a ground of

freedom – it is itself *freed* by the world (or unleashed or released or deployed or appropriated).

The freeing-up character of the world is disclosed on two levels. On one level, the freeing up of

things occurs all the time – ordinary life is constituted by a process of freeing up, in effect, a

flow of possibilities released and appropriated and others hidden and concealed.[154] On another

level, the freeing up of ordinary life can itself be freed (by Dasein) such that the freeing up of the

average everyday world is shown *as it is*. Average, worldly freedom can be understood *as*

freedom. Or in other words, we come to understand the fact that we are freed by the world and

that we free things all time, and this frees us from the assumptions we have of our possibilities,

of things and of the world *as it is* while allowing us to remain open to our possibilities, to things

and to the possibilities of the world *as it is*.[155]

   Another way to put it is that the world is a self-freeing or letting-be process within which

humans press into average possibilities – the possibilities of the average everyday are granted

from the self-freeing process of the world. As Heidegger writes, "*Freedom alone can let a world*

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[154] Guignon writes: "Though Heidegger insists that it is *world* that does the freeing up here, this freeing does not occur independently of Dasein. The fact that there can be an opening or clearing in which things can emerge into presence… is made possible by the fact that Dasein always stands out into an open space of possibilities of self-interpretation, and thereby creates an arena or leeway in which things can come to presence and stand out *as* mattering or counting in some determinate way. Through this freeing up or making room for things, there is a clearing or "dis-closedness" in which concernful dealings can" (Guignon, "Freedom," 92) reveal things as they are.

[155] As Guignon writes: "This freeing up or letting requires that we resist our common tendency to impose onto things a prior grid of interpretation designed to make them fit our antecedent expectations. In freeing, we give things the breathing room they need to unfold in their own proper way, to "essence" (in Heidegger's verbal use of the word *wesen*), without foisting on them an interpretative schema determined by our interests and projects. This freeing is mostly passive: it involves a receptivity that requires on our part a "self-surrender" [*Sich-freigeben*] to the things so that they can show themselves as they are." (Guignon, "Freedom," 92)

govern and "world" Dasein;"[156] or in other words, "[freedom] is what lets world govern – by projecting and throwing world over being."[157] Indeed, humans are themselves *part* of the network freed by the world – the world *frees* humans. Notably, the movement of letting-be can itself be freed – in effect, it can be revealed as a process into which humans are always already delivered. Deeper still, the self-freeing process of the world is itself a possibility freed from the self-freeing process of history. The world is granted or opened by history. Thus, the self-freeing movement of the world is subtended by the self-freeing movement of world-history, which releases the world, *i.e. this* world and not another world, into its historical situatedness. Just as humans are passively delivered into the self-freeing process of the world, the world is passively delivered into the self-freeing process of history. Moreover, both world and history are disclosed *as* self-freeing processes by authentic being. Only authentic Dasein, the being who can understand that the ground of its being is a self-surrendering, self-secluding, self-transcending process, can freely choose to be what it is, and thereby freely choose to open the world as it is in its self-freedom. In short, Dasein is the clearing from which the world as the opening or releasing or freeing of meaning is first disclosed *as such*. This, parenthetically, is also the reason Dasein does not determine or constitute being – *i.e.*, the reason the temporal-idealism model does not capture the full process of being. Humans encounter intelligible, significant, meaningful possibilities of the world as they are always already freed for us by the world and furthermore, by the historical situatedness of the world.[158]

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[156] ER 103/WG 102

[157] ER 105/WG 104

[158] As Guignon writes: "it means that we encounter the entities themselves, entities are "multi-faceted" and can be taken in a "plenitude" of possible ways. What we discover is the entities themselves, though we are open to

On this basis, I can begin to clarify the relation between temporality and freedom. For the most part, humans do not understand the way they understand the world, the givenness of the network of relations of the world, or the possibilities of their being. In their daily activity, humans allow the predetermined, ordinary ideas of the public to determine possibilities. Humans do this because they are finite – rather than seize the truth of their being, they flee into the anonymous social form of the They [*das Man*]. In this way, Dasein does not understand the possibility of freedom (*i.e.*, the possibility to choose to choose itself) *as* a possibility. Moreover, in the flight from death, humans do not understand the fact that the network of relations of the world is a context in which humans are passively delivered; although the efficient way of everyday life is freed as a possibility of the world – *i.e.*, the facticity of the world delivers or releases or frees life into the process of existence – life *is* efficient because it does not understand itself *as it is* and thus does not understand itself as freed.

However, Dasein has the possibility to understand itself as a finite being (a being that, amongst other possibilities, flees from possibility most of the time). Dasein *can* understand its own temporality, the fact that it always already presses into definite, determined, mastered possibilities while concealing a play of indefinite, non-determinable, unmasterable possibilities. This, then, is the crucial point. In authentic temporality, when Dasein chooses to be what it is, Dasein is free in its choice to be a being that reveals and conceals possibility – Dasein chooses to be a self-transcending being. Although the choice is to choose to be itself, the choice to choose *is* the mark of Dasein's individuality – in other words, the choice *is* existential freedom. Notably,

encountering them from different points of view and contexts of relevance in which they appear. Insofar as any revealing of aspects is at the same time a concealing of other ways of taking things, we also constantly go astray (*Irre*). But this fact – that we can encounter things in errant ways – shows that we can also encounter them as they truly are." (Guignon, "Freedom," 93)

existential freedom is *not* willfully determined, but rather, it is a surrendering to the (facticity, thrownness, opening of the) world. In making the choice of existential freedom, the other, deeper type of freedom appears as a possibility – the possibility of ontological freedom. In choosing to choose itself, Dasein (*i.e.*, existentially free Dasein) chooses to understand its submission to the world and the world's character of releasing worldly possibilities. What changes between average, everyday Dasein and existentially free Dasein, then, is that in the former, the passivity of life is forgotten, while in the latter, Dasein's submission to the (letting-be or freeing character of the) world is made explicit.[159] In existential freedom, the play of worldly possibilities shows itself *as* possibilities for the first time. No longer lost in the averageness of the public, Dasein is released from the fixity of ordinary thinking – Dasein is released into the openness of the letting-be character of the world such that the openning of possibility can be seized *as such*. Existentially free Dasein chooses itself as the site of disclosure of the opening of the world and understands that it is ultimately submitted to the world. Thus, existential freedom *frees* the ontological freedom of the temporal being that is always already in the world. Put simply, existentially free Dasein chooses to surrender itself to the ontological freedom of the world. Signaling the later Heidegger, yet another way to describe the ontological freedom of the world is as *Ereignis*, the event or happening of historically-situated life.

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[159] As Günter Figal contends in "Being-with, Dasein-with, and the "They" as the Basic Concept of Unfreedom, from Martin Heidegger: *Phänomenologie der Freiheit*" the 'they'-self is not characterized by unfreedom. As Figal points out "The closing off of disclosedness presupposes disclosedness" (Günter Figal, "Being-with, Dasein-with, and the "They" as the Basic Concept of Unfreedom, From Martin Heidegger: *Phänomenologie der Freiheit*," in *Heidegger's Being and Time: Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt, 115 (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005)). This is to say that freedom is always already a possibility of Dasein whether it chooses to choose itself (and thereby *free* its freedom) or not.

One possibility that is released from existential freedom is the possibility to think the meaning of being in an originary, fundamental way. In the confrontation with one's own death, in the choice to choose oneself, in the existential freedom to be open to the possibilities of the world, temporality – the ground of being – is *freed* to be thought. Pressing further into the freedom process, existential freedom frees the possibility of authentic self-disclosure and authentic self-disclosure *frees* ontological freedom (or *Ereignis*) to reveal the meaning and ground of being as temporality. Furthermore, ontological freedom *frees* the possibility of showing the ground of temporality as historicality – that is, the temporal process is itself submitted to or delivered by or granted by the movement of history. In its disclosure, the ontological freedom of *Ereignis releases* the definite, determined, mastered history of metaphysics such that it shows itself *as it is*, which thereby *frees* the indefinite, non-determined, unmasterable *other* history *as* a possibility for the first time.[160] Therefore, the choice to choose itself is the existential freedom of Dasein (*i.e.*, the transcendence of Dasein) that opens the possibility of ontological freedom (*i.e.*, the transcendence of being).

Conclusion:

Throughout my discussion – from everyday meaning to ontological-historical meaning, from normativity to temporality, from the 'not' to the nothing, from everyday transcendence to

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[160] As Karin de Boer writes, "The fact that thinking is finite and situated thus ultimately means not so much (or not only) that it is actually part of a concrete history, but primarily that it is guided by a temporal horizon that it has not itself brought about. Only on the ground of "forgetting" this horizon can something like the history of Western philosophy occur. Insofar as Temporality has in itself the tendency to increasingly confine itself to Present, philosophy has no power over the course of its own history. On the other hadn, heidegger will always emphasize that thinking has the possibility of freeing itself from the confined temporal perspective of the tradition. This does not, however, deny the finitude of that thinking. Freedom, whether it concerns the thematization of beings or of being, is always a thrown freedom." (Karin de Boer, "The Temporality of Thinking" in *Heidegger's Being and Time: Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt, 35 (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005)

the transcendence of Dasein and the transcendence of being – passivity is an ever-present

leitmotif.[161] Here again with freedom, there is a pervasive passivity; freedom is not a choice in

the way we usually understand choice,[162] but a receptivity, a submission or surrendering to what

is always already the case. If we are (always already) what we are whether we are inauthentic or

authentic, then why *should* we make the choice to choose ourselves? Why choose existential and

ontological freedom? To reprise the discussion of normativity, we *must* be what we are, and we

are what we are *not*. Thus, we *must* be what we are *not*. We are *not* ourselves – differentiated,

authentic, free – most of the time. We are *not* open to possibility – the possibility to be other than

average, the possibility to think other than ordinarily, the possibility of impossibility, the

possibility of what we are 'not', the possibility of the nothing – and thus, to be what we are *not*

means we *must* be open to possibility. We *must* make the choice to choose ourselves when the

choice presents itself. We *must* choose existential freedom.

By extension, we *must* free ontological freedom. Our possibilities are thought from a

definite, determined history of being, which *must* be disrupted such that the fixity of metaphysics

is dismantled and other possibilities – other ways of thinking being – are released. We *must* be

what we are *not* which includes *other* ways of thinking about what we *are* and *must* be. The

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[161] As Heidegger writes: "But if transcendence (in the sense of freedom for grounds) is ultimately understood as groundless, the essence of what we called the *preoccupation* of Dasein in and with being is brought into focus. Though situated in the midst of being and disposed by it, Dasein is *thrown* among beings *as free* "potentiality for being." What does not stand within the power of freedom is *that* Dasein is a self by virtue of its possibility – a factical self because it is free – and *that* transcendence comes about as a primordial happening. This sort of powerlessness (thrownness) is not due to the fact that being infects Dasein; rather it defines the very Being of Dasein. Every project of world, then, is *thrown*." (ER 129-131/WG 128-130)

[162] As Guignon contends: "It is often said that, in order of an event to be an agent's action that is truly his or her own, it must be in accord with the agent's considered reasons or settled with concerning what sort of person he or she wants to be. Or it is assumed, that, in taking the course of action he or she has taken, the agent could have done otherwise, that is, that there were options other than the one chosen, so that he or she can be said to have *chosen* this possibility *rather than* some other." (Guignon, "Freedom," 81)

important point is that in all cases the *must*, that is, ontological normativity, does not imply a necessary, definite and determined possibility. Ontological normativity – freed from existential freedom or authentic temporality – implies holding oneself open to *other* possibilities (*i.e.*, the things we are *not*) such that we can be what we *are* and *must* be. It is not that we *must* determine a *definite* possibility or choose *a* particular way to be – what we *must* do is hold ourselves open, or in other words, we *must* transcend (average everyday transcendence) such that transcendence is disclosed *as* transcendence. As one critic describes the thorny topic of normativity in Heidegger:

> "We have seen that for Heidegger there is a forgetfulness of the question of Being, but this is a forgetfulness which belongs to the nature of the question and the presencing and withdrawal of being itself; it is a necessary forgetfulness for which we can never *be held* responsible. And yet, the question of Being is that for which we are called to assume responsibility. Responsibility for the question of Being is a possibility for *Dasein*, and part of the recollection of the question of Being is the recollection of the question of *Dasein*'s responsibility for the question."[163]

Buckley raises an interesting and nuanced point – we are not (and cannot be) *held* responsible, and yet, as a possibility of being amongst a play of possibility, we *can assume* responsibility. There is nothing holding us to ask the question of the meaning of being, nor is there a consequence if we do *not* assume responsibility for being, technically speaking. As Buckley says, referring to the *Discourse on Thinking*, "We are to do nothing but wait…

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[163] R. Philip Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992), 253.

something we would still be doing if we became disconsolate."[164] We wait whether or not we

remember (or forget) our waiting; we wait despite us.[165] We can wait without understanding *that*

we wait, or we can *assume* our waiting and in so doing open ourselves to the eventualities of the

waiting process. In either case, we are responsible for the wait (the former implicitly the latter

explicitly) insofar as *we* are waiting, the waiting *is* ours, or in other words, without us there is *no*

waiting.[166] The corresponding point is we *are* responsible whether or not we *assume*

responsibility for being. We *are* responsible for preserving the event of being even though it is

not up to us how we are deployed by existence, how history appropriates the various conceptions

of being and world, how the world frees the possibilities into which we are delivered, how life is

granted to us, how time thinks us, how or when or *that* we die. Responsibility is given in our

pervasive passivity.[167] We *are* responsible because without us – the site of disclosure, the locus

of appearance – there is nothing. We *are* responsible that there is being rather than nothing.

Indeed, we *are* responsible for transcendence *as such*, thus, we *can assume* our responsibility for

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[164] Martin Heidegger, *Discourse On Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 62.

[165] For a more extensive study of the expression of *Gelassenheit*, see Daniela Vallega-Neu's "Heidegger's Imageless Saying of the Event" (Daniela Vallega-Neu, "Heidegger's Imageless Saying of the Event," *Continental Philosophy Review* 3-4, vol. 47 (2014): 315-333). In the article, Vallega-Neu argues that there is a downward shift in attunement in the later Heidegger where he focuses less on communicability and performs a "responsiveness to imageless dispositions" (2). Vallega-Neu describes this shift as moving towards releasement [*Gelassenheit*] as the event of truth.

[166] As Heidegger writes at the end of *Introduction to Metaphysics*: "Being able to question means being able to wait, even for a life-time. But an age for which the actual is only whatever goes fast and can be grasped with both hands takes questioning as "a stranger to reality," as something that does not count as profitable. But what is essential is not counting but the right time – that is, the right moment and the right endurance." (Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 221)

[167] As Charles Guignon writes in *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge*: "Because each of us has this unique responsibility for making something of his or her existence as Being-a-whole, Heidegger says that Dasein "is in each case mine." The task of realizing my life as a totality is mine alone: it cannot be delegated." (Charles Guignon, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), 93)

our self-transcendence – a transcendence that transcends despite us, a transcendence for which

we perhaps *should* assume responsibility, to which we perhaps *should* surrender ourselves.[168]

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[168] As Heidegger writes at the end of *The Essence of Reasons*: "[In] *transcendence*, the essence of the finitude of Dasein discloses itself *as freedom for reasons*. And so man, as existing transcendence abounding in and surpassing toward possibilities, is a *creature of distance*. Only through the primordial distances he establishes toward all being in his transcendence does a true nearness to things flourish in him. And only the knack for hearing into the distance awakens Dasein as self to the answer of its Dasein with others. For only in its Dasein with others can Dasein surrender its individuality in order to win itself as an authentic self." (ER 131/WG 130)

Conclusion

One central conclusion from this work concerns the importance of the phenomenological (rather than chronological) development of Heidegger's thought. My reading suggests that the progression of Heidegger's ideas, and likewise the primordiality of problems, should be treated phenomenologically (and not, for example, pragmatically or historically). From such a reading, Heidegger can be read and newly re-read in ways that discover fresh interpretations and revealing insights. More to the point, only a phenomenological reading can engage with Heidegger's vast and rich body of work as well as the enormous quantity of Heideggerian scholarship. To do this, one must be able to think through the primordiality of a problem, conceptualize it within its relevant contexts, and bring to light the gaps in thought (not only the gaps of others, but especially the gaps in one's own path of thought). In other words, a reading cannot read from all perspectives, yet a disclosive reading must be self-aware of its perspective and self-revising of its process. Only a descriptive method such as phenomenology, one that understands the limits of its own understanding, is prepared for such a task. On the other hand, the difficulty with such an approach is, in a sense, a question of watchfulness – the phenomenologist must remain ever alert to the self-concealment of her method. Thus, disclosure is never complete, but only further withdrawn as the phenomenological method presses deeper into its path – such is the complexity and enduring allure of philosophy.

In a sense, the main point of chapter 1 is to set the stage for an ongoing investigation of the complexity of disclosure as it relates to Heidegger's philosophy and

to reading Heidegger's philosophy. I thus engage with one foremost debate in Heideggerian scholarship, namely, the analytic (especially pragmatist) and continental debate. Entering into this conversation allows me to situate my reading within an ongoing and fruitful discussion as well as to glean insight from what the debate itself discloses about Heidegger – that is, regardless of how Heidegger *should* be read, his philosophy has given rise to *this* way of interpretation, to *this* particular debate. Even the way we think about Heidegger's thought is disclosive of Heidegger's thought (and of course, of our own). The challenge for phenomenology is to keep in constant contact with this process of self-transcendence, a challenge that I introduce in the first chapter.

Related to the priority I place on the phenomenological method, my reading furthermore casts the ideas of the later Heidegger as important and helpful phenomenological clues to understanding the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. Unlike critics who interpret Heidegger's philosophical path in distinct parts, I read Heidegger as always the vigilant phenomenologist who is ultimately in the throw of the self-describing, self-revising, self-transcending process of re-thinking thought. Reading the later Heidegger into his earlier works is interesting not so much because it shows us the path Heidegger will take, but more importantly, it reveals the path Heidegger did *not* take, the ideas that are *not yet* said. Reading in this way opens the possibility of re-reading him in another way. Thus, my treatment of Heidegger, especially in my forward-looking readings of *Being and Time*, can be seen as a preparation for additional inquiry.

Pushing further into my method of reading, in the second chapter I argue that the meaning of being can only be re-thought by a process of reflection that takes issue with

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concealment. The main goal of the chapter is to directly engage with the relation between revealing and concealing, an examination that reveals the 'not' as the ground of possibility. Thus, I argue that to understand meaning, we must understand the ground of possibility, *i.e.*, what is *not* possible. The investigation opens a discussion of the fundamental passivity of being, a topic that brings us into contact with the later Heidegger, his discussion of *Ereignis* and the authentic encounter of being through art. The third chapter delves deeper into the topics introduced in the second chapter as I further consider the idea that what we are *not* is (part of) what we *should* be. From the 'not' of the ground of possibility in the second chapter, I move to the normativity of the nothing in the third. I show that Heidegger's discussion of normativity in *Being and Time* already hints at the event of (a historically situated) being. In this way, I argue that Heidegger is already interested in re-thinking the history of thought such that the unthought, *other* beginning of philosophy can be freed from misconception. The second and third chapters can therefore be construed in the following way: I show that the meaning of being can be understood as the transcendence of possibility, and that possibility first appears to us from the self-secluding 'not' (*i.e.*, what we are not and should be), a (negative) possibility that is itself grounded in the ever-withdrawing, refusing, unmasterable nothing.

The fourth chapter attempts to re-think the path thus far in new and deeper terms. I argue that underpinning the various themes between reading, meaning, what we *are* and are *not*, what *is* and is *not*, what *should* and should *not* be is one basic condition: temporality. Even in *Being and Time* (although he does not say so explicitly in this language), Heidegger already discloses the self-transcendence of temporality as

deploying being for the preservation of *Ereignis* (i.e., for the preservation of the happening of transcendence). In short, transcendence as such is the event of being. I show that the transcendence of being (*i.e.*, the surpassing of the history of thought to *free* the unthought) can (and perhaps must) be sought from an understanding of being as a process of transcendence (*i.e.*, as deployed by and preserving the self-transcendence of being).

The final topics I briefly address concern freedom and responsibility as they pertain to the choice to choose oneself in the authentic encounter with death. Are we responsible for what we are not? Are we responsible to be what we are not? *Should* I be free? My investigation of these questions is rudimentary in nature, and, without being able to explore the topic more fully, I want to close with a few thoughts and questions for future study. The choice to choose oneself is the choice to choose to surrender oneself to oneself – this is my freedom and my responsibility. I am free and responsible to surrender. This might sound strange at first blush, but less so in light of Heidegger's discussion of guilt, death and the possibility of authenticity. And yet, there is something troubling about the notion that freedom *must* be sought in surrender, that passivity is my responsibility, that I am most myself when I, in a sense, give up myself. *Should* we surrender? And what does it mean for philosophy if surrendering is the basic comportment of authenticity? Perhaps we need to characterize the nature of surrender more carefully. What, after all, does it mean to surrender? When I think of surrendering, thoughts of giving way, giving in, giving up spring to mind, but this is perhaps not what Heidegger has in mind. As a topic of further study, I want to suggest that surrendering, on the contrary, is a decision *not* to give way or give in or give up. Indeed, Heidegger's use of resoluteness [*Entschlossekeit*] is telling –the passivity of authentic openness is a more

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determined being than the inauthentic activity of closure. Surrender is unwavering

determination – this too, then, is the part of the path of phenomenology.

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